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April 1972 35p

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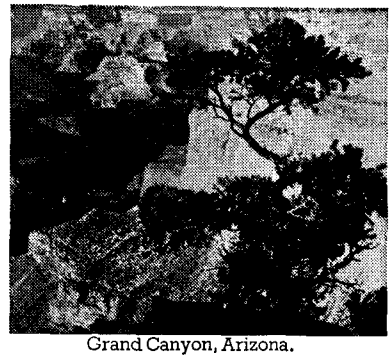

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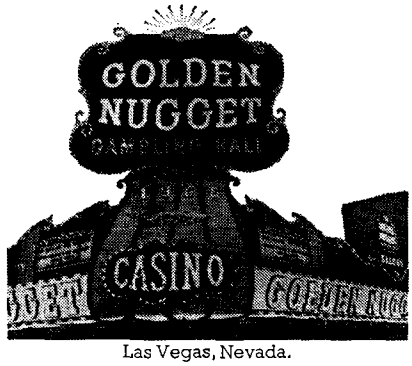

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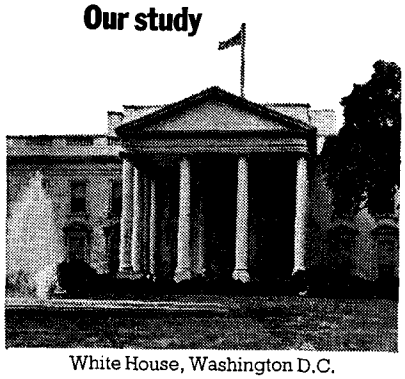

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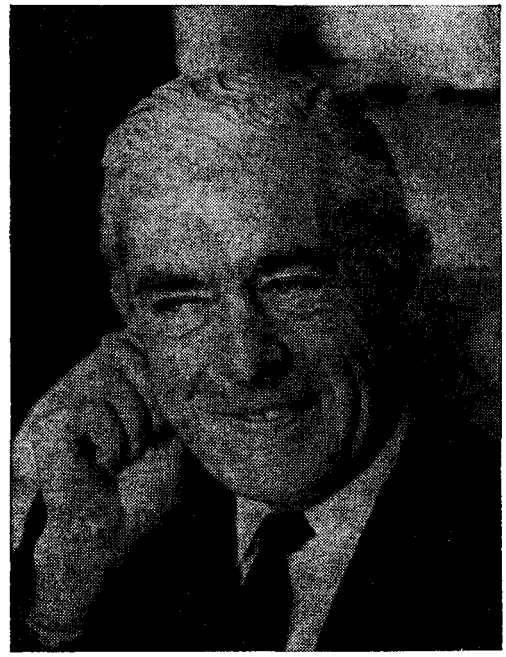

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Walter Laqueur

A Reflection on Violence

On Murder, Politics & the Contemporary Sense of Doom

WAR THROUGHOUT THE AGES—up to the invention of the nuclear bomb, that is—had both advocates and opponents. Civil war—or internal violence—has been until recently rather less popular. Writing almost two thousand years ago, Lucan in his *Pharsalia* included the following prayer:

> Make us enemies of every people on earth, but save us from civil war.

Many centuries later in an evocative passage commenting on the year 1793, Victor Hugo wrote:

> A foreign war is a scratch on the arm, a civil war is an ulcer which devours the vitals of the nation.

The last few years have witnessed a sharp upsurge all over the globe of collective violence, urban and rural guerrilla warfare, political assassinations, kidnappings, hijackings, and various other acts of terror. It would be much easier to list the countries which have been spared such turbulence than those who were afflicted by it. Luxembourg has been relatively quiet, so have Scandinavia, Australia and New Zealand. I cannot think of many other countries outside the Communist world—and those living under Communism have undergone other forms of political violence.

From the suppression of the riots in East Berlin and Czechoslovakia in 1953 to the invasion of Hungary in 1956 and of Czechoslovakia in 1968, and most recently the uprising in Poland, the Soviet leadership has faced repeated violent challenges to its power. It has not hesitated to deal ruthlessly with these challenges, and today the Communist régimes present a front of strength. Yet no one can be certain about the depth of dissatisfaction, the lack of loyalty, and the resentment hidden behind this façade. It is one of the characteristics of a dictatorship that it always seems more purposeful and effective, in other words stronger, than a democratic régime—until the very moment of its downfall. Moreover, nationalist dissension has had a strong impact on the Communist world as well as on the West: the monolithic bloc which existed in Stalin's days has gone forever.

It is surely no coincidence that historians and sociologists these days are devoting themselves to a study of political violence—five years ago, or ten, this would not have been the case. How is one to explain this sudden sprouting of "internal war" and other forms of political violence? Is it a novel phenomenon, unique and inexplicable, or simply a repeat performance with some new ingredients? Is there a common denominator to the various manifestations of political violence? And what effect is it likely to have? I am a historian and I believe that to most members of my profession this wave of violence has not come as a total surprise. When Professor Harry Eckstein wrote his study on "internal war" some ten years ago he complained that social scientists had neglected the study of violence.[1] This was no doubt connected with two facts—that violence is not the most attractive of subjects, and that it is not ideally suited for the application of quantitative techniques and other social science methods. I don't think historians can be accused of similar sins of omission; for while they may not have the answers, they know that (at the very latest, since Adam left Paradise) the history of mankind has been to a large extent one of political violence. They know that there has been guerrilla warfare for almost as long. The description in the Bible of David's conspiracy at the cave of Adulam sounds almost contemporary:

> And every one that was in distress and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him, and he became a captain over them. . . . (I Samuel, 22).

The anthropologists have given us reports about the Arapesh in New Guinea, and the Lepochas

[1] Harry Eckstein, *Internal War* (1964).

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in Sikkim, and other tribes which know no aggression. Happy are these people: but they have remained outside history. As for the rest of mankind, historians and philosophers alike have taken a dim, or fairly realistic, point of view for a long time. When Kant wrote that "War requires no particular motive—it appears engrafted on human nature," no one had as yet heard about modern psychology and the "frustration-aggression syndrome." The progress of civilisation has been agonisingly slow; there have been ups-and-downs, and violence and terror have never been far from the surface. It has been only of late that some well-meaning students of human behaviour have come to regard peace and goodwill, civilised and humane behaviour as the norm, and collective violence as a temporary deviation; as a result they have been both perturbed and puzzled by recent events.

A LITTLE HISTORY should have taught them differently. We were spoiled by two decades of relative calm when the economic damage caused by the Second World War was not yet repaired, and when the political and psychological effects of the great blood-letting were still palpably felt. During this period the preconditions for a fresh upsurge in political violence did not exist. But the post-war era is over. It may be more helpful and illuminating to compare this new age not with the one preceding it but with others more distant in time, such as, for instance, the last centuries of the Roman Empire. I refer to the period of *Roma saturata*, when the Emperors began to engage in philosophy rather than make war, when a new strange sect appeared on the scene preaching something very much like "Make love not war", when banditry spread and when the bandit leaders were venerated as saints. It sounds very topical when we read in Tertullian that heretics have connections with very many magicians, itinerant charlatans, astrologers and philosophers; or when another contemporary historian reports that the leaders of what we would now call guerrillas were not slaves or oppressed peasants but men of free birth and wealth.[2] This was the period when oracles triggered off rebellions, when visionaries announced the impending downfall of Roman rule: the rule of the world would pass to a saviour coming from the East—an angel 96 miles high and 16 miles wide. The leading ideologists of the day predicted that there would be a general breakdown with all-wasting fires, the sun checked in its course, the moon bloody, mountains levelled, rivers filled with blood and, eventually, the last judgment. It sounds very modern indeed, certainly to the student of present-day radical literature. There have been similar manifestations throughout the ages, but I suspect that their origins have been insufficiently explored.

CIVIL VIOLENCE is various, and there is an almost unlimited number of varieties. What Tolstoy said about marriages seems to apply *a fortiori* to this subject: all happy ones are similar, but each unhappy one is unhappy in a different way. Some of these varieties have no apparent motive; there was an anarchist group in Russia before the First World War which called itself "The Motiveless Ones." But most pursue certain political aims and they can be subdivided, broadly speaking, into two major groups, traditional and modern. The various national liberation struggles against colonial powers (such as the fight of the FLN against the French in Algeria, or the campaign against the Portuguese in Africa) are, no doubt, traditional in character even though they include not infrequently some new elements. The same is true of national dissension in South-east Asia, in Nigeria and Cyprus; or of the reawakening of old tensions in Ulster, in Belgium, in Canada, and elsewhere. Communists, Trotskyites, Maoists and the New Left may infiltrate these movements in order to make political capital, but basically they are *nationalist* in character. To the same group of traditional conflicts belong certain violent manifestations of the class struggle such as peasants' attacks against land-owners, industrial violence and sabotage, etc. Such movements have been frequently described and analysed, and if I do not deal with them in what follows, this does not imply that I want to belittle their impact or to underrate their prospects. Unless central state power asserts itself, some of these separatist movements (to give but one example) may cause the disintegration of more than one country, big or small, in Asia and Africa. But, essentially, these trends do not constitute a new departure in politics; and there is little one can say about them except that national separatism is a constantly underrated factor

[2] See Ramsay MacMullen, *Enemies of the Roman Order* (1967).

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and that minorities, if they feel themselves discriminated against, tend to resist. This has been going on for a long time in many parts of the world, and while it no doubt deserves further study, it is the other type of civil violence—guerrilla warfare and organised acts of terror in the revolutionary context—which preoccupies us much more these days.

INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE TERROR are not exactly new. Political murder was common in ancient Greece and Rome as well as in the Islamic world and throughout Chinese history. If the term "guerrilla" was coined only some 160 years ago, the thing itself—warfare carried out by irregular forces—is surely as old as the hills. If the resurgence of political violence has nevertheless caused surprise and shock in recent years, it is no doubt mainly because most of us thought that it had been overcome, at least as far as the modern industrial societies were concerned, because it was both immoral and ineffective.

The extreme Left dissociated itself long ago from the use of terror. Commenting on the recapture of Vienna in 1848 by counter-revolutionary forces, Karl Marx wrote that there was only one way to shorten the agony of the old order and the bloody birth-pangs of the new—revolutionary terrorism. But he modified his views later on; and when Engels wrote (in 1895) a new preface to Marx's *Class Struggles in France* he said that the time of surprise *coups*, of barricades and street fighting to be carried out by small élites leading amorphous masses lacking class consciousness was over once and for all. The development of modern arms had made street fighting "obsolete."

The situation in Russia was different. The programme of the *Narodnaya Volya* (People's Will) in 1879 stated that terrorist activity—destroying the most harmful individuals in the government, defending the party against espionage, punishing the perpetrators of notorious cases of violence and repression on the part of the government—was highly desirable. It aimed at undermining the government's power, demonstrating the possibility of fighting the régime, arousing in this manner the revolutionary spirit of the people and its confidence in the success of the cause, and finally giving shape and direction to the forces that were to carry on the struggle. This programme reminds one almost textually of Che Guevara's writings, but then there is not very much new under the sun. The *Anarchist Cookbook* recently published in New York—which gives fairly detailed practical advice on how to prepare detonators and bombs in one's kitchen—draws heavily on another such text written 70 years earlier by a German immigrant, Johannes Most, the full title of which was *Science of Revolutionary Warfare, a handbook of instruction regarding the use and manufacture of Nitroglycerine, Dynamite, Gun Cotton, Fulminating Mercury, Bombs, Arsons, Poisons, etc.* The essential novelty is that the new manual includes a long section on electronics, a field unknown in Most's days, and an even longer one on drugs which 70 years earlier were not yet considered part of the revolutionary heritage. But even the combination of hashish and political murder is not unprecedented; I refer to the medieval Assassins and their exploits.[3] Having quoted the programme of the 19th-century Russian terrorists, I ought to add in fairness that they never claimed that their doctrine was universally applicable. On the contrary, when President Garfield was assassinated in 1881, the Central Committee of *Narodnaya Volya* sharply denounced it: in a land where the citizens are free to express their ideas, political assassination reflected a despotic state of mind and was, therefore, to be repudiated.

Russian terrorism was effectively suppressed by the Tsarist régime. On the ideological level it was decisively refuted by Plekhanov in a famous tract. Lenin, Plekhanov's pupil, took a more ambiguous view of revolutionary terrorism: he justified it "in certain circumstances" (for instance, in Latvia in 1905) and emphasised that the rejection of partisan warfare by the socialist movement was a matter of *expediency*, not of *principle*. If it appeared that terror achieved *results*, one should not reject it out of hand. These views were uttered at the time of revolutionary upsurge. In later years Lenin agreed with Trotsky, who wrote in 1911 that a pinch of powder and a slug of lead were not sufficient to change the social order. A terrorist attempt could, at best, cause temporary confusion in the ruling circles; but the capitalist state does not rest upon ministers and cannot be destroyed together with them . . . the mechanism remains intact and continues to function. Communist strategy ever since, with some notable exceptions, has been not only against individual terror but

[3] See Bernard Lewis, *The Assassins* (1967).

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has taken a critical view of putschism and guerrilla warfare, urban and rural alike.

ORTHODOX COMMUNISTS CONTINUE to adhere to this line, but others no longer believe that "terror does not pay." It cannot be denied that personalities are sometimes of decisive importance. Had Hitler been shot in front of the Munich *Feldherrenhalle* in November 1923, or if Lenin upon his arrival at the Finland Station had met with an accident, 20th-century history would almost certainly have taken a different course. It can be argued that these were exceptional cases and that, by and large, individual terror does not work—certainly not in the developed nations. If a new, more successful Guy Fawkes appeared on the scene and managed with his angry brigade to blow up the appropriate buildings in London or Washington he would cause a week's confusion but not the overthrow of "the system." Some of the advocates of the new terrorism (*viz.* Fanon or Guevara) have developed their strategy *outside* Europe and North America, in underdeveloped countries that were or are ruled by small oligarchies and in which, therefore, the chances for a quick, violent *coup* or protracted guerrilla warfare are much better. Some of these advocates of revolutionary violence argue, moreover, that the application of terror morally "cleanses" and "purifies" the people or peoples concerned. Such peculiar notions of political hygiene are not particularly original. They appeared conspicuously around the turn of the century, and were gleefully taken up by fascism.

Those who preach "terror" in the industrially developed countries have done so out of despair; they have given up hope of attaining their aim, whatever it happens to be, by political means. Unlike the Communists they do not believe any longer in the revolutionary potential of the working class, and the peasants have become a counter-revolutionary force *par excellence*. Like Bakunin, they believe that the working class has been corrupted, and that it is only from the flotsam and jetsam of society—the *Lumpenproletariat*, the outcasts of all classes—that they can hope for any mass support.

But do they need any mass support? They have come to believe, not altogether wrongly, that the more sophisticated society becomes, the more vulnerable and the more exposed it is to the actions of a few dedicated, determined revolutionaries. There are, clearly, differences among the various theoreticians of guerrilla warfare. Mao and Vo Nguyen Giap are still closer to Lenin; they do not regard partisan warfare (which should always be directed by the party) as the only possible road to victory. In their view it is essential to mobilise the masses in this way for *la lutte finale*. The Latin American guerrilla leaders, on the other hand, are openly contemptuous of the Party but put all their hopes on the *foci*—revolutionary armed bands. They dissociate themselves from Marxism inasmuch as they pay no attention to "objective conditions." Apparently an insurrection is *always* possible, provided those involved are brave and well organised. These revolutionaries are more in the tradition of the Latin American *pronunciamentos* than of Marxism.

There are other differences among the various exponents of guerrilla warfare. Régis Debray paid hardly any attention to *urban* guerrilla warfare; Guevara considered it a possibility but did not give it high priority, whereas the Brazilian Marighela regarded the cities as the most promising battleground by far. The defeat of Régis Debray and Che Guevara, on the one hand, and the spectacular exploits of the Tupamaros, and to a much lesser extent the ALNX in Brazil, on the other, has caused a swing in recent years of guerrilla warfare from the countryside to the towns. The cities offer so much better protection to the insurgents than the pampas or mountains where the arms and techniques of counter-insurgency can be applied by the government with far greater ease.[4]

THE PROPONENTS OF GUERRILLA WARFARE believe, like Mao, that the road to victory in the developed countries is through the "Third World." Such belief is based on the mistaken assumption that the industrial West would be lost without Afro-Asian markets and raw materials. But the industrially developed nations do not in fact "depend" on the Third World. If India and Brazil were no longer part of the world economic system, this would cause a temporary shortage of tea and coffee, but, I am afraid, little other inconvenience for the rest of the world.

WHAT ABOUT THE PROSPECTS of the urban guerrillas in the United States and the other highly industrialised countries? The

[4]See: Carlos Marighela, *For the Liberation of Brazil* (Penguin, 1971), and Robert Moss, *Urban Guerrillas* (Temple Smith, 1972).

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chances of achieving results in terms of political and social change are, it seems to me, virtually nil. There were some 4,330 bombings in the United States between January 1970 and April 1971, but Mr Nixon is still President and Mr Agnew his deputy. The result would not have been different even if there had been ten times as many attacks. But if victory is as remote as ever, the chances for at least temporarily paralysing life in the country are much greater, creating a climate of insecurity which will result in economic recession: permanent chaos rather than permanent revolution. The leaders of the urban guerrillas assume that as a result of continuous attacks the old order will either collapse or, more likely, try to defend itself by extreme means, to do away with civil liberties, become "fascist." This, in turn, will cause further polarisation: the guerrillas will gain the support of many liberals now convinced that "the cure is worse than the disease. . . ."

I suspect that these tactics are largely based on miscalculations. The prospects for urban guerrillas in the Western world are not at all good. True enough, modern cities offer a great many advantages to the attacker—but not in the long run, for they may well find themselves in total isolation. What has been easily destroyed is often easily and quickly repaired; it may even act as a spur to a sagging economy. Lastly, the urban guerrilla wants to achieve quick success; if he does not see any spectacular progress he loses courage; in his group there are, inevitably, internal splits, and mutual recriminations. The fate of the Weathermen and the Black Panthers are obvious illustrations. And since the guerrilla, unlike the orthodox Marxist, negates the political struggle, this may well be the end of his revolutionary career.

I would not want to rule out urban guerrilla victories in certain countries where political circumstances are particularly favourable. But even there, the most the guerrillas can hope for is to act as pace-makers for the traditional parties of the Left, especially the Communists (as, for instance, in Uruguay at present). They may take up arms against a National-Revolutionary or Left-wing government as in Ceylon and perhaps tomorrow in Chile, if their expectations are not fulfilled. But, on the whole, they are finding it easier to get publicity than to get power, and their disruptions are hardly a factor in bringing about social and political change.

THE MEDIA—television in particular—have greatly helped the progress of small, insignificant groups by giving them wide exposure. The constant need for sensationalism is one of the inbuilt features of modern mass media—the more extreme one's views or actions, the more newsworthy they are. But the media, with their bias for the extreme, do not, unlike King Midas, turn everything they touch into gold; on the contrary, their kiss is very often the kiss of death. They need seven-day wonders; today's cultural hero is bound to be tomorrow's bore. Television, moreover, is a cruel medium: it has probably damaged more reputations than it has created. If the opinions aired on television strike viewers and listeners as stupid or outrageous, such exposure, far from helping the cause, effectively destroys it.

NEVERTHELESS, THERE HAS BEEN a dramatic upsurge in violent politics in recent years, and the question remains: how to explain it? Is there a general unified theory on violence? There is now a great deal of literature on the subject which I have studied, I admit, with much initial scepticism. There is the usual heavy emphasis on methodology, the unending invocations of modernisation and mobilisation, the free-for-all model-building, the attempts to quantify or at least compare things that can be neither quantified nor compared. And it usually leads to such profound insights as the statement that people at eighty are less likely to mount the barricades than at eighteen. This is not to say that all that has been written by social scientists on the subject of revolution, guerrilla warfare, and other forms of civil violence is wrong and can be safely ignored. Eckstein's observation in 1963 was quite correct: scarcely anything in the French *ancien régime* has escaped blame by one writer or another for the revolution. But if it is true that many conditions can generate "internal war"—economic crisis as well as economic prosperity, social mobility as well as its absence, social change as well as stagnation—then less attention should be paid to the so-called "objective conditions" and more to the people who engage in political violence, the intellectual and voluntaristic factors, the personality of the leaders, the composition of the followers, their political orientation, and so on. *These* are the interesting questions; but since there is no room for the "rigorous analysis" and "controlled experiments" that social scientists demand, it is more than doubtful whether we can expect from

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them more than occasional, almost accidental insights. Could it be the process of "modernisation" which disrupts social balances and undermines traditional society? Several writers have argued that precisely for this reason peasants have constantly rebelled. Yet others sharply disagree: peasants do not rise when they are poor or when things get worse; they are always with those who have the power.

One of the first modern scholars to engage in the comparative study of civil strife was Pitirim Sorokin.[4] He found that in Europe the thirteenth century was the most violent one so far as the "average level of disturbance" was concerned. I shall not go into the finer points: the differentiation between "turmoil . . . conspiracy . . . internal war," and so on. Others have followed in his tracks, but this again is a field in which *quantification* is only of little use—for what good are theories in which, say, the French and the Russian Revolutions count as much as some Paraguayan *pronunciamento* which lasts for a day, a week, or even a month? Let me give but one example. *The History of Violence in America* —a report to the U.S. National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence—provides on page 652 a table concerning political violence profiles of 84 countries for the period 1948-1966. According to this table, Finland and Luxembourg have the "lowest profile"; they score *nil*—and Indonesia has the highest score, 190. My doubts soared when I gathered that France scored almost five times higher than Italy; Lebanon ten times higher than Israel and 83 times as high as Saudi Arabia; and the United Kingdom twice as high as Afghanistan and Ireland. I do not know on what ingenious schemes such tables are prepared, but they are (to put it as mildly as possible) open to some doubt.

IT HAS BEEN KNOWN for a fairly long time that there is a connection between frustration and aggression, and the concept of "relative deprivation" has recently been introduced by some sociologists. It has been shown that overcrowding stimulates aggression—among lemmings and rats as well as human beings. But all these theories explain, at best, only part of a complex reality which obstinately defies generalisation. The inhabitants of the most densely populated countries—such as Egypt, Holland, Belgium—are not *necessarily* more aggressive than, say, the Mongolians; and while life in a big city has no doubt many drawbacks it remains to be shown that city dwellers are in fact more aggressive than farmers. "Relative deprivation" is not of much help either because there are relatively deprived people all over the world at all times: perhaps no less in Sweden and Madagascar (notably peaceful countries in our time), than in the United States or Colombia.

More sophisticated is Professor James C. Davies' concept of the *J*-Curve which postulates (following Tocqueville) that revolution is most likely to occur when a prolonged period of rising expectations and rising gratifications is followed by a short period of sharp reversal during which the gap between expectation and fulfilment widens and becomes intolerable. The author of this thesis has studied in detail the American Civil War, Hitler's rise to power, and the present turbulence in the United States. But what if he had studied instead the Russian or the Chinese revolutions? There were no "rising expectations" in Russia in 1917 or in China before 1949, and certainly no rising gratification. Many social scientists have detected a causal correlation between social and economic change and political violence—when traditional means of production and time-honoured occupations have been superseded by more modern ones resulting in unemployment, when traditional habits and beliefs have undergone change, this has resulted in confusion, demoralisation, and very often violence. But in some places the level of political violence has still been relatively small, in others exceedingly high. The Industrial Revolution, the greatest social revolution of recent centuries, has hardly anywhere resulted in major political revolutions—whereas lost wars frequently have. Some have detected a causal connection between violence and modernisation as well as social mobility. According to Ivo and Rosalind Feierabend the highest and lowest points of the "modernity continuum" will tend to produce maximum stability in the political order, whereas

[5] P. A. Sorokin, *Social and Cultural Dynamics*, vol. III (1937), and *The Sociology of Revolution* (1925). A good summary of the literature and a current discussion in the field is Henry Bienen, *Violence and Social Change* (University of Chicago Press, 1968). See also: Ted Gurr (ed.), *Why Men Rebel* (Princeton, 1970), the publications of Ivo K. and Rosalind L. Feierabend in the *Journal of Conflict Resolution* (1966) and the *History of Violence in America*; of James C. Davis (in *The American Sociological Review* (1962) and *The History of Violence in America*), the writings by Peter Calvert, David C. Schwartz ("A Theory of Revolutionary behavior", New York, 1970), Tanter and Midlarsky (*Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 1967), Nesvold, Gurr and Ruttenberg, *The Conditions of Civil Violence* (Princeton, 1967).

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a medium position will produce maximum instability. In other words—the most and the least developed societies are the most integrated and, therefore, relatively immune to manifestations of political violence. All this stands to reason—or so it seemed, until recent events in the United States and other highly developed countries made us doubt it. As for Latin America, it is my impression that the most backward countries, the most developed countries, and indeed those in between have been more or less equally hit by insurgency and other turbulence: if there is a general pattern of political violence it cannot be discerned with the naked eye. Professor Lucian Pye wrote in his study of *Guerrilla Communism in Malaya* (1964), that it was almost impossible for political controversies within highly complex industrial societies to develop to the point of sustained and organised violence. He should have added: provided that they *also* happen to be totalitarian dictatorships—in which case there may not be political controversy in the first place. Pye wrote his book in 1956; we are all sadder and wiser now.

THERE ARE, IN SHORT, many theories about the origins, the character, and the function of political violence. Some see it as a rational, others an irrational, phenomenon; some regard it as permanent, others as transitional; some as mainly caused by socio-economic, others by psycho-social, causes. Some interpret it as an instrument to eliminate backwardness; others, on the contrary, as a tool to spread barbarism. Of the various theories of political violence that have been submitted and discussed in recent years, few have been rejected outright; most have been simply discarded and forgotten. Many contained a grain of truth, but tried the impossible: to find a magic formula, a key to a phenomenon for which, alas, there seems to be no simple answer and no common denominator. Perhaps one day we shall have theories on political violence; I am fairly sure there will not be one grand theory.

IT IS DIFFICULT to share the optimism of some social scientists that it is somehow possible drastically to reduce the amount of political violence in the foreseeable future—except, of course, in dictatorships with effective political controls. However just the social order and however perfect the rulers, there will always be disaffected, alienated, and aggressive people, claiming that the present state of affairs is *intolerable*, that any and every change would be for the *better*, and that *only* violent change could be effective. Admittedly, the number of such people and the violence of their behaviour varies from country to country.

Nevertheless, the prospects for guerrilla warfare are not, as I have argued, too good. Only a few years ago, the Palestinian irregulars seemed an irresistible force—today they are in very sad shape indeed. In 1962, Venezuela was on the brink of disaster—it had the strongest, most experienced guerrilla movement and the weakest political and social order; Castro and his friends thought it would be the next country to fall. Seven years later the movement has virtually ceased to exist. The same happened in Colombia and Peru. The only Latin American country in which the extreme Left has come to power is Chile, which is also the only country in which there was *no* sizeable guerrilla movement.

Human beings do learn, however reluctantly, from historical experience. Potential *guerrilleros* will draw conclusions not only, and perhaps not mainly, from their set-backs in recent years but also from the political futility of their actions. Since Cuba, they have as yet to win a decisive victory; and the Cuban example has lost much of its attraction for them. All this is not to say that the guerrilla movement is everywhere doomed, that it may not have a spectacular success in one country or the other. But I have been preoccupied with the rule, not the exception.

WHAT CONCLUSIONS, IF ANY, can be drawn from recent history about the deeper reasons for the large-scale revival of movements sponsoring political violence?

Above all, it reflects the weakness of the established order. For such movements spread only if there is at least some chance of success—if there are no guerrilla movements in the Soviet Union this is not the result of the absence of conflicts, but the presence of a strong government which would suppress without compunction any attempt to challenge its authority. Revolutionary movements succeed not because "objective conditions" are "ripe"—to a certain degree these always exist, but they are never fully present. Revolutions succeed because their enemies are weak. Political régimes fall, not because they are wicked, but because they are

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ineffective. No régime, however abhorrent, has been overthrown as a result of the magnitude of its crimes. But a great many fairly good ones have fallen because their leaders lost faith and nerve; because they no longer believed in the rightness of their cause; because, to the fanaticism of their enemies, they had nothing to juxtapose but tired scepticism. Weakness, admittedly, can have a great many sources—a lost war, or even a victorious war, if it caused many victims and much disruption, a deep structural economic crisis, or perhaps some major natural disaster. But our own age—like some previous ones, which were characterised by a high level of political violence—is remarkably free from such catastrophes, and therefore the deeper causes of the weakness, the fatigue, the scepticism, are connected with the spiritual crisis of our time: the loss of faith (be it religious or ideological), the depreciation of traditional values which have resulted in pessimism, emptiness, boredom, and in various curious near-suicidal manifestations. I am, of course, aware that the situation in the developing countries is different; but in the developed industrial societies of the West this seems to me the core of the problem. The key is not in the GNP, nor in the level of material expectations, but in the minds of men.

WHAT MAKES CIVILISATIONS become unsure of themselves, doubt their *raison d'être*? There are, of course, always objective factors—political, social, economic—and we shall ignore them at our peril. But economic reasons do not suffice to explain why democracy in Germany succumbed to its enemies and why an even more severe crisis did not have the same effect in the United States. If the instinct of survival has been weakened, even minor challenges seem overwhelming, insurmountable. What causes a weakening of will? I do not profess to have an answer; but, if one is wanted, it is these kinds of questions which seem to me to constitute the most promising direction for further enquiry. Afflictions of the instinct for survival, of the will, are not necessarily fatal; they tend to appear like a bolt from the blue, and occasionally they disappear with equal suddenness. In France, around 1890, it was *de rigueur* to argue that the country was "finished." Observers referred to demographic stagnation, military weakness, the high consumption of alcohol, the prevalence of decadent trends in literature and in the arts, general demoralisation—everything pointed in this direction. Everyone was beyond despair. *Finis Galliae* was the generally accepted slogan. As one leading economist wrote: France is going under like a lump of sugar in the ocean. Incidentally, this was also the heyday of anarchist attacks, of Ravachol and Emile Henry, of bombs thrown in cafés and the Chamber of Deputies, of the murder of President Carnot. Fifteen years later, without any forewarning, everything changed almost overnight—the preoccupation with eroticism gave way to newly-fashionable outdoor sports, and the natural sciences and technology attracted the young generation. The manly virtues were again extolled by writers and artists. France was "at last herself again" to quote a famous best-seller of those days; she became almost aggressively nationalist. Objectively nothing had changed: the birth-rate had increased, the French economy was still falling behind its neighbours, alcoholism had not decreased, and church attendance had not gone up. But whereas in 1890 these had seemed fatal diseases, fifteen years later most people were inclined to dismiss them as of no great consequence.

I am not sure whether we are entitled to draw far-reaching conclusions from the French example. Perhaps all it teaches us is this: since the human factor is so important, and since human behaviour is so unpredictable, would it not behoove all our prophets—of doom, decline, and degeneration—to be a mite cautious in their predictions?

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Sidney Hook

The Rights of the Victims

Thoughts on Crime & Compassion

ONE OF THE GREAT paradoxes of our time is that as the danger of major international wars recedes and the standard of living rises, the level of domestic violence and crime increases at a frightening rate. I need not rehearse the statistics that confirm the observations and experiences of concerned and intelligent citizens throughout the United States, especially of those who live in or visit our chief metropolitan centres.

Accompanying this increase in violence and crimes of violence has been an impressive, sympathetic concern—some have unfairly called it a "preoccupation"—with the human and civil rights of criminals and of those accused of crime. American judicial opinions as well as academic treatises on criminology reveal a growing and thoughtful sensitivity to the possibility that the procedures by which defendants in criminal cases are booked and tried, and the evidence against them evaluated, may lead to miscarriages of justice. Legal practices that were once accepted without any qualms and doubts at a time when the U.S. Bill of Rights was adopted as a safeguard of the basic liberties of the people against the possible tyranny of the state, 18th-century practices that endured far into the 20th century, have been discarded in recent years in consequence of new, more enlightened readings or interpretations of our constitutional rights.

There are those who maintain that the alarming increase in crimes of violence is a direct consequence of the liberal modifications of our arrest and indictment procedures, of U.S. Supreme Court decisions that allegedly have shackled the law enforcement authorities and resulted in an ever larger number of recidivists or repeaters among criminal defendants. However, such an inference may be a case of the fallacy of *post hoc ergo propter hoc*. Causal questions in human affairs are notoriously difficult to resolve because of the number of variables involved. Striking correlations are not always evidence of causal connections. For the purpose of my analysis, it is not necessary either to reject or accept the view—asserted by some with great confidence—concerning the influence of court decisions on criminal behaviour. I suspend judgment about the *causes* of the current increase in crimes of violence, and take my point of departure only from the indisputable fact that the marked and alarming increase in domestic violence has indeed occurred.

What I propose to do is to raise some fundamental questions about the basic ethical and jurisprudential issues involved.

WHY SHOULD WE as citizens be concerned with the human and legal rights of persons accused of breaking the law? Why should we seek to liberalise the processes of law enforcement by raising protective hedges around such persons, thus making their conviction more difficult?

The answers summarise a library of literature. First, over and above any considerations of humanitarianism, we wish to avoid the danger of convicting the accused on the basis of plausible evidence, when he in ultimate fact may be innocent. The conviction of an innocent man comes closest in the intuitive judgment of mankind to being an absolute wrong. Second, even if we do not make the presumption of innocence, there is a good reason why we should want to defend and extend the rights of those accused of crime. For hard as it may be for us to imagine, someday we ourselves may be in the dock facing criminal charges of one kind or another. The quirks of fate or hazard of fortune or the hidden purpose of providence—call it what you will—have caught up even the most strait-laced and chokered individuals in tragic and violent situations, as bizarre as they were unexpected.

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And not all of them have been crimes of passion. There is a perennial and humbling wisdom in the Puritan's admonition to his son as they witnessed a wretch being dragged to the gallows: "There but for the Grace of God go I. . . ." Both Goethe and Tolstoy, who understood the human heart because they saw deeply into their own, have acknowledged that there is no crime in the calendar of human folly and bestiality which in some situations they could not conceive themselves committing. And if we pride ourselves on our own immunity from temptation, it may testify not so much to our incorruptibility as to our lack of imaginative power.

THIS IS THE CASE for the rights of the criminal or the person accused of crime—and a powerful case it is. But before we bring in judgment we must perform another act of imaginative identification, much simpler and more natural, and that is with ourselves as victims of crimes of violence.

Granted that I am a potential criminal, I am also a potential victim of crime. The U.S. statistics of mounting violence show that cases of murder, non-negligent manslaughter, and forcible rape have skyrocketed. It has been estimated that in America's large metropolitan centres the risk of becoming the victim of a serious crime has more than doubled in the last decade. Since many crimes of violence are committed by repeaters, the likelihood of my becoming a victim of crime is much greater than the likelihood of my becoming a criminal. Therefore, the protection of my right not to be mugged, assaulted, or murdered looms much larger in my mind than my rights as a criminal defendant.

And not only to my mind. A poll conducted in the 20th Congressional District on Manhattan's heavily Democratic Upper West Side by Representative William F. Ryan (as reported in the *New York Times* of 8 January 1972) yielded some surprising results in view of the liberal political complexion of the district. Ninety per cent of the 9,400 persons responding rated New York City's streets as unsafe. "One out of every three persons responding—34 per cent—said he had been the direct victim of street crime."

LET US BE CLEAR about some things that have become obscured by our legitimate concern with the rights of criminals and those accused of crime. The potential victim has at least just as much a human right not to be violently molested, interfered with, and outraged as the person accused of such crimes has to have a fair trial and a skilful defence. As a citizen, most of the rights guaranteed me under the Bill of Rights become nugatory if I am hopelessly crippled by violence, and all of them become extinguished if I am killed. The rights of victims are recognised in some legal jurisdictions which compensate them for disasters in which they become involved through no fault of their own. In England, it has been suggested that the assets of apprehended criminals who have committed capital crimes be distributed to the dependants of their victims. But my point here is that this emerging legal right of the victim is dependent upon the prior recognition of his moral right not to be victimised by the lawbreaker.

No matter how we seek to escape from acknowledging it, there is a direct conflict between the rights of the criminal and of persons accused of crime and the rights of their past and potential victims. In some classes of cases it is clear that the greater the right of the person accused of crime, the less the right of his future victim. For example, the right of a person out on bail for a crime of violence, to receive bail when he is charged with committing the same type of violent offence, and to be granted bail even when he is charged with committing the offence a third time—a right which he legitimately claims since he has not yet been found guilty of the first offence—conflicts head-on with the rights of his victims who can legitimately claim that they suffered this violence because the person at bar enjoyed his constitutional right to be free on bail. Those who fail to see this do not understand the nature of moral decision. It is not a choice between good and bad, right or wrong—this represents no moral choice but merely summarises the completed moral judgment. It is a choice between good and good, right and right, and, sometimes, between the good and the right. They also fail to see that this conflict of rights is expressed in the U.S. Constitution's Bill of Rights in which the free exercise of religion conflicts with the principle of separation of state and church, and in which the right to a free press may conflict with the right to a fair trial. In consequence, they ignore or underestimate the law-making powers of the U.S. Supreme Court, some of whose Justices in the past deceived themselves with the absurd view that the rights

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of the Bill of Rights are *absolute* and cannot be abridged under *any* circumstances. If rights conflict, they obviously cannot *all* be absolute.

WHY HAS THIS CONFLICT between the rights of the potential criminals and the rights of the potential victims not been previously recognised?

Among the reasons undoubtedly has been the fact that in all periods, except the present, when the rights of criminals and those accused of crime were being recognised, the incidence of violent crime was, relative to preceding periods, declining. Where crime was rife, the human rights of those accused of crime were hardly recognised or ruthlessly sacrificed on the altar of law and order. The recognition and appreciation of the human rights of criminals and those accused of crimes go back a long way, as the right of sanctuary in biblical times indicates. When crime became a mass phenomenon, however, these rights were honoured more in the breach than in the observance.

How, then, should we resolve the conflict between the rights of the criminally accused and the rights of their potential victims? I submit that at the present juncture of events, because our American cities have become more dangerous to life and limb than the darkest jungle, we must give priority to the rights of potential victims. I am prepared to weaken the guarantees and privileges to which I am entitled as a potential criminal, or as a defendant, in order to strengthen my rights and safeguards as a potential victim. Purely on the basis of probabilities, I am convinced that I run a greater danger of suffering disaster as a potential victim than as a potential criminal or defendant. It is these probabilities that shift from one historical period to another that must be the guide of wise, prudent, and just administration of the law.

Actually, although the protection of the rights in the Bill of Rights has been extended by the Court to state jurisdictions of criminal law, originally they were intended to curb primarily the violation of political rights by the Federal government. The judicial legislation that reinterpreted and extended these guarantees to hold for criminal defendants in state courts was, in large measure, certainly justified because of changes in social needs and the development of more humane attitudes. But today, a humane concern for the increasing number of victims of violent crimes requires a reinterpretation, another emphasis.

When we read that preventive detention at the discretion of the judge (by denial of bail to repeated offenders charged with extremely violent crimes) is denounced by some judicial figures as a "betrayal of elementary justice", as "smacking of the concentration camps of Hitler and Stalin"; when we read that a person jailed for the death of 12 persons is freed from jail and the case against him dismissed because the prosecution's only evidence against him was a voluntary confession to the police who had failed to inform him of his rights; when we read that a man who murdered one of three hostages he had taken had a record of 25 arrests ranging from armed robbery to aggravated assault and battery, and that at the time of his arrest, he was free on bail awaiting grand jury action on charges in five separate cases in a two-month period preceding the murder; when we read that a man whose speeding car had been stopped by a motor-cycle policeman who, without a search warrant, forced him to open his trunk that contained the corpses of a woman and two children, walks out of court scot-free because the evidence is ruled inadmissible—we can only conclude with Mr Bumble that the law is a ass.

THE TRUE WISDOM of the law consists in recognising the conflict of rights and adjudicating the conflict by a decision that strengthens the whole structure of rights in the community. At a time when crime is rife, if the proof of a grave crime like murder is incontestable on the basis of evidence that may be "tainted" because the law-enforcement officers disregarded the niceties of procedure, then legal action should be taken against these officers by the state or by the defendant rather than giving, in effect, a grant of immunity to a murderer.

We wish to reduce the role of violence in human affairs without sacrificing the principles of justice. The extension of the privileges against self-incrimination to absurd lengths by American judges who abandoned common sense in a desire to establish a reputation for liberalism has, to my knowledge, no parallel in any other national legal jurisdiction. To elicit relevant testimony it has required legislation that has enabled some criminal defendants to purchase an undeserved immunity from punishment for very serious crimes. The statistics of violent crimes show that our situation is much too serious to

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indulge in sentimentalism at the expense of our fellow-citizens. When crimes of violence are rare and infrequent, we may justifiably lean over backwards to protect those accused of serious crime from a possible miscarriage of justice. But it is not justice but only compassion that leads us to say that "it is better that nine or ninety-nine guilty men escape punishment for their crime than that one innocent man be convicted. . . ." For that is certainly not doing justice either to the nine or ninety-nine guilty or to their potential victims. When crime is as rampant as it is today, those who invoke this dictum to justify strengthening the rights of persons accused of violent crime at the expense of the rights of the potential victims of violent crimes, are not even entitled to the self-righteous claim that they are moved by compassion. Compassion, if it is a virtue, must itself be balanced and equitable. Where, we ask, is their compassion for the myriads of victims of violent crime? At what point do the victims come into their ethical reckoning?

THERE ARE NO easy answers. What I am suggesting is a reconsideration of some of our basic jurisprudential assumptions in this age of growing violent crime. In times of crises we suspend certain traditional guarantees, all too often hastily and thoughtlessly. We can avoid such crises and the panic response to them by reflective action—measured, firm, and humane. This requires a rethinking of our first principles in the ethics of law and punishment, a more pragmatic consideration of the historical context, and a greater awareness of social needs.

Liberalism in social life may be defined as devotion to human freedom pursued and tested by the arts of intelligence. But not all who call themselves liberal understand either themselves or the doctrines they profess. I have called them "ritualistic liberals"—those who think they can be liberal without being intelligent. A particularly conspicuous species of this genus is found among those writers on crime and law enforcement for whom the victims of crime are only incidental rather than central to the problem of crime prevention. Such writers in their mournful assessment of tragic encounters between law breakers and law officers tend to equate with a fine moral impartiality those who are slain while attempting or committing murder, with those who lose their life preventing it. Both kinds of fatality are de-

"I always carry a $5 dollar bill in my coat pocket to satisfy a mugger and save me from being knifed. . . ." W. H. AUDEN

TO THE EDITOR:

One of these nights I will not be coming home to my wife and four-year-old son. I will have been the victim of one of the numerous packs of muggers that have turned the streets of Bedford-Stuyvesant-Williamsburgh into an asphalt jungle filled with terror and violence for my fellow black and Puerto Rican neighbors and myself and my family.

I am of black and Puerto Rican parentage. I grew up in Harlem and East Harlem in the midst of fighting gangs. As a young man I would come home late at night from evening college after working during the day. During all my previous 39 years I never really felt afraid for my own safety. I have been afraid for my mother, my son, my wife and other loved relatives, but never for myself. Now I'm afraid, really afraid, because I can see my number coming up, and feel absolutely helpless.

I want to see my son grow up into a happy, successful and honorable person. What is most terrifying is the knowledge that the odds are now definitely against that happening.

So many of my friends, neighbors and relatives are getting mugged, stabbed, assaulted and robbed that I know it is just a matter of days or merely hours before my turn will come.

What makes it even more horrifying is that now for the first time I know how a helpless old man, a woman or a child feels while walking down the street in the early evening darkness. Scared and absolutely helpless, with no policemen around, and knowing that no one wants to get involved.

I am no longer a cocky combat-ready ex-Marine infantry sergeant. I am a frightened man returning home from work at night, looking behind me, to the side of me, to the front of me, wondering if tonight is the night I will get it.

Will I get it in the subway exit where the bulbs are broken nearly every night, in the street while passing one of the numerous empty lots or empty houses, or on my doorstep while putting my key in the lock?

I know it is too late to save my life, but I pray that the people and our leaders wake up, organize and stamp out illicit drugs, permissiveness and loss of respect for authority, which I know are the causes of this tremendous increase in violent crime.

Then we will be able to save the lives of our children and of countless other people that deserve a life free from fear of a violent death or even of a violent mugging. Then people will be able to concentrate on living life to its fullest, on being happy, bright-eyed and filled with a love for humanity that is reciprocated by their fellow human beings.

LOUIS S. CAMPBELL

Brooklyn, Jan. 30, 1972

Letter in "The New York Times"

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plored as if there were no moral distinction between them.

A similar absurd equation is being drawn today by those who proclaim that "the widespread popular concern about crime is almost as serious a problem as the crime problem itself"—the implication being that the fear of crime is almost as great a threat to society as crime. Such a judgment is as bizarre as it is irresponsible. Where crime exists, especially violent crime of unusual magnitude, fear of crime is natural and reasonable, and not a form of hysteria or paranoia. Only in the absence of genuine persecution can a person be called a victim of a persecution complex. Only in the absence of widespread crime is the fear of crime a likely sign of hysteria.

In our dangerous world, the human race might not survive unless there were intelligent fear. That is why, for example, intelligent fear of nuclear warfare, or of large scale global pollution, or of the grim effects of the population explosion, *is* justified. Only a sociological mad hatter would say that the fear of a nuclear holocaust is almost as serious a problem as the threat of one, or the fear of the population explosion as dangerous as the pressure of unrestricted growth.

Let us have done with extremists who would mindlessly substitute either toughness or permissiveness for intelligence in their simplistic response to the mounting crime wave. A fruitful way to begin the quest for intelligent solutions is to reorient our thinking in the current period to the rights of the potential victims of crime, and to the task of reducing their number and suffering. In this way we can best serve the interests of both justice and compassion.

From V.C.

(*a Gentleman of Verona*)

Give me the Daulian bird and Locrian Arsinoë.
I want to arrange a protest in high places.
I just want to say to a few fat-nippled goddesses:
It isn't fair.

It's your door that I'm complaining about.
It's far too neutral. It admits revolting lovers,
fast talkers and political nitwits.
I hate it.

It never speaks but if it did I know it
would have an American accent, smacking
its lips and saying, glutinously: "that girl's a
cocksucker."

If I had my way it would be closed for ever
against those pretentious people whose main crime
is that they aren't me. It should only open,
youwise, mewards.

Doors are disgusting. They'll let in anything—
secret police, creditors, puritan censors,
men with eviction orders. They're great painted
layabouts.

But that I know it can keep out competition,
I'd have it off its hinges. Don't talk about oiling!
It's a Public Enemy—to me, you, and Venus
a complacent traitor.

Gavin Ewart

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John Toft

The Zombie

MY FAVOURITE GOD is Vinayagar, an elephant. How could God be anything but an elephant? What other being has such majesty, mercy, universal patience, universal colour, sense of infinities and knowledge of what, unhappily, is? My first encounter with Vinayagar took place in the Sultanate of Perak. Vindran and I had stopped by the wayside for a dish of iced *kachang*. Savouring this beany curd, we grew aware of a fat Hindu priest eyeing us from across the road. Diesel lorries blotted his bulk from time to time with theirs, but at each rematerialisation he wore a further expanse of smile, and, because I smiled back, he beckoned us to his shrine.

"Undoubtedly he is a crook," Vindran murmured in resigned tones as we crossed over.

"Even crooks can be instruments," I said, having learned during these past weeks how to speak like a wrinkled *guru* and relishing my new skill. Vindran looked impressed and stroked his black perfect beard with his white dark-creased palm.

Eye-popping paps a-wobble, the priest welcomed us to a courtyard where the sun clapped its lidless eye everywhere and sent us scurrying across the grit for the canopied altar-steps. Joss-stick smoke wreathed like a performance of *Bharatha Nattiam* before the images of Siva and Parvati seated on Mount Kailasi. They loomed wide-eyed, fixed on reality, not seeing us.

"The shrine is superintended by Vinayagar." The priest pointed a fat finger at the curly roof over the altar. On it the image of an elephant smiled forgiveness at the savage sun. "Vould you vish to be blessed and named in indiwidual prayer? Is one dollar for blessing. Two if you require particular prayer extra."

The priest put the offering somewhere in the billows of his skirt, from which a packet of Dunhills and a Japanese miniature radio peeped out.

A small boy appeared from the trees, his bare shoulders as unreal as a doll's and his demeanour one of such shy dignity that the sun itself must have felt abashed for brashness and stood behind a cloud. The boy did not look at us any more than Siva and Parvati had done, but kept his gaze entirely on his ritual: the preparation of what looked like curry paste. Meanwhile, the priest intoned a prayer from which my name plonked like a piano-chord amid the level strumming of a *sitar*. Then, dipping a finger in the paste, he marked a red, yellow and grey blob in the middle of my forehead. Its fragrance prickled the stupefied air. Purified and acceptable, I was toothily beamed on by the boy and in that instant I felt myself become a child again. I saw all the things that children see: ants trimming their business to the presence of my fortuitous feet; the jab of a lizard's tongue towards them; the finial feather of a cockerel's tail behind a statue of Rama's enemy, Ravana; a bat's smear on Parvati's perfect nipple. I saw but did not categorise or react along the line of habit. I simply saw. There was no simile for the hibiscus or frangipani: each was itself. The orchids stopped looking arachnoid and became, purely, orchids. The heat no longer oppressed me: I had become the heat. I was at one with scorpion's sting, snake's tooth and diesel's stink.

Blessing bestowed, my priest rolled back to his cubicle, lit a Dunhill and pressed the knob of his radio. The boy retreated solemnly into the jungle. Vindran touched me with reverence and said,

"It is essential to press on," adding, as if to clinch his command of both idiom and dynamism, "regardless."

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I WATCHED HIM, earnest at his Volkswagen's steering wheel, and I knew what he was thinking: how I might best be pleased. Just now he lived to make me happy. Of course, before I came he scarcely gave me a second thought; after my departure he would more or less forget that I had ever been. But while I was there I was his all-in-all.

At Butterworth we got straight on to the ferry, and the island moved like a musical cadence towards us out of the sunset. Rain-clouds had just passed over Penang Hill, leaving it to slumber in its own blue breath. Vindran did not need to point: his will became mine and my eyes moved in pre-arranged directions to take in the brown patches of the junk-town crouching under classic pediments and colonnades which themselves deferred to the giant money-spun-sugar-blocks of hotels and secretariats.

The islanders satisfy their senses in all things, even worship. The porch of the mosque of Capitan Kling is made for singing prayer by moonlight in as one swirls one's feet in its black pool; the pagoda of Ayer Itam is as brilliant and clashing as Peking Opera, and one moves upwards and upwards as at a rising scale on a p'i-p'a; while in a small suburban temple there is an altar where snakes gather, all sensuality out of the spermy earth, swaying more slowly than equatorial time, throbbing like green arteries, orgasmic as death.

The island fancies itself symbolised by the tower of the Merlin Hotel, revolving in glittering jerky somnolence as it goes, in a featureless fusion of eastern and western life-styles, perpetually nowhere.

IT WAS TO THIS prestigious viewpoint that I was taken that same evening. I was the guest of Vindran's cousin and his wife, while Vindran himself went on to see his fiancée in Alor Star. The cousin owned a shop which imported and retailed Indian fabrics. These were ceremonially ranged on the shelves: saris of peacock blue and flame-red, coral and saffron and ice-green, of silver-threaded black and white-embroidered gold. Tanjore, a small plump man with the most candid smile, bowed us through his shop, opening up in me the abysses of inadequacy I always felt when faced with such fathoms of Asian hospitality.

"You must meet the wife," he said as if there had been a chance of avoiding it. He was as proud as Vindran of his English idioms and displayed them as he would his best fabrics, with a smile of humility and pride. Likewise he showed off his wife. She was Anglo-Indian and I doubt whether I shall ever see a more beautiful woman. Her dark brown hair hung full and shining to the small of her back, her cheek-bones were high and the skin covering them was of the most melting colour. She also had on a lot of gold: filigree ear-rings, snake-twists on wrists and fingers, multiple trickles of chain. When she gave me her hand, it grazed me.

"This is Iris," Tanjore said, while her eyes flashed with irritation at the needlessness of the naming. She then turned them on me and I trembled at the longing and the fury I saw in them.

"What's that thing on your face?" she asked. I thought at first she meant my very English nose, but it was the blessing-spot between my brows that she pointed at. It began to crumble. Vindran explained and her eyes narrowed with distaste.

"This is Villiam," Tanjore said, again with his proud humility. "Named after the great dramatist Shakespeare. Vindran chose the name for us."

"Out of my hat," Iris added, glancing indifferently first at Tanjore, then at Vindran and finally at William, who was brought forward from the shadows in the arms of an Indian maid about twelve years old. William was like a grumpy angel with his golden curls, his brazen bulbous beauty. And the maid was like a little black monkey, holding the child out, for me to inspect and pronounce "a bonny lad."

"A brawny lad" would have been more accurate. The brawny bronze limbs struggled in the black wiry grip and the brawny bronze face scowled into mine, giving full rein to the fury the mother managed to control in hers. Then a brawny fist lunged out. Not finding me in range, it swerved back on the face of the maid, who showed no emotion. She simply kept her thick mulberry lips closed and faded back with William into the shadows.

Tanjore led me to my room, lent me a sarong and showed me the shower. I noticed as I undressed that there was a rush mat under

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my bed. A lizard tut-tutted from a picture above it. The picture was of Iris, alone, in her floating western wedding-dress.

When, bathed and freshly shirted, I re-entered the sitting-room, Iris, Vindran and Tanjore were waiting for me and tensely watching *The Lucy Show* on the television.

"I must apologise for this house," the woman said, switching the fans to "fast".

I looked questioningly at her, but she offered no clarification. Tanjore smiled a burden-shouldering smile.

"Iris does not care to live above shop. She says it is not done in U.K."

"Oh but it is—" I began.

"Not in the upper income bracket." Iris snapped. Her elbow on the arm of a yellow-buttoned plastic chair, she waved her gilded forearm in a dissatisfied way.

"You see," Tanjore went on, by way of explaining everything, "Iris is largely British."

"D'you want whisky?" Iris asked with effortless relevance. "Lakshmi."

The maid suddenly and silently manifested herself. *Lucy* flickered and clamoured in the background.

"On the rocks, I suppose," Iris said, as if speaking a line from *Macbeth.*

I dared not refuse. Besides, the whisky was at my elbow before I could say anything at all. I swallowed one of the "rocks" and coughed frantically.

IRIS WATCHED ME as if I were the conclusion of an experiment. Lakshmi's face did not change, but somehow I could feel her registering each wrench of my diaphragm. Iris eyed her back to the darkness. Then, "West Bromwich," she said abruptly.

At first I thought this was a humorous way of smoothing over my cough, rather like blessing a sneeze. After a grinning pause I realised that Iris was telling me where she had lived in England.

"Oh that's—" "awful" I was going to say, but I decided I had better be careful, having reason to doubt Iris's taste. So "very interesting" I tailed off.

"Vest Bromvich," Tanjore savoured the words and smiled at the smiling Vindran, "has famous football team."

The two men giggled at an alarming pitch. Iris did not take her eyes off me. I nodded and looked hard into my whisky.

Giving a sigh of dissatisfaction with the nature of things, Iris rose, bitterly lovely in her dark blue and white dress.

"It's time you went to Alor Star, Vindran. And time for us to go and eat."

I gulped the last "rock" and my glass was spirited into the shade by a thin black hand.

We passed through the darkened shop and out into the South Sea air to where Tanjore's new Toyota stood waiting to sleek us through the lively lanes, along trishaw- and lover-strewn Weld Quay, down to the *Pengkalan Raja Uda* where we waved Vindran off across the straits. I felt fearful as if a major defence had fallen. When we turned back to the town I guessed where we were going: the lurid hotel-tower beckoned across the studded aquamarine sky. Were all the animals of the island gazing towards it from their jungle fastness and wondering what joys they were missing?

IRIS LED THE WAY, through the *Merlin's* doors into freezing conditioned air, not seeming to be conscious of companions. She ignored the bows of slender Chinese and Malay youths in immaculate green uniforms and entered and left the lift without paying the slightest regard to what was going on around her. The hotel might have been her habitual vacuum.

We followed her to a window seat and looked out on the slowly jolting panorama of lights and black spaces. The bygone shape of the E and O hotel stood like a beautiful doll's house miles below us. We were classless, characterless, rootless overgrown adolescents peering down vertiginous time at a tiny, stratified, self-certain infancy.

"There's the new reservoir." Iris indicated, with an uncontradictable gesture, a steely fringe of high-powered sodium lamps. She craned round for service and a battery of waiters streaked slimly towards us.

"Highballs," she rapped at them. She might have been making a very direct comment on their strangling pants or using an over-intimate nickname.

"Iris always has highball," Tanjore giggled.

So, apparently, did we when with Iris. Never mind, I comforted myself, there is a superb meal to come. And my mouth watered as I envisaged a banana leaf of Vindaloo,

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Koormah, Dall, Brinjal Pickle and Bombay Duck. But it was a Chinese cuisine surely, so my oral images shifted to Sharksfin Soup, Sweet and Sour Pork, Bean Sprouts and—

"Giant T-bone steak and French Fried for him." Iris pointed her jewelly finger at me. "I'll have a Cheeseburger and a Banana Split."

Tanjore ordered *nasi goreng* for himself and whispered,

"Iris enjoys to see man eating outsize beef. Unfortunately, being Hindu, I must not indulge."

A mammoth slice of undercooked and once (or twice) frozen Australian flesh was set before me.

"You needn't have refrained," I said to Tanjore. "This isn't cow, it's elephant."

He did not laugh; nor did Iris. The way I ate it must have been more insulting even than my joke. My knife was blunt so I tore huge chunks of flesh between my jaws and, with blood trickling down my chin on to my batik shirt, tried to gnash them into digestibility. I dared not look at Tanjore but fixed an accusing eye on Iris who was watching my struggle as if it somehow indicated my virility count. All the retaliation I could muster was,

"I suppose *you*'re a Christian."

"Of course." She was imperturbable as ever. "Aren't you?"

My reply got lost in the overture to the International Cabaret, the perfect accompaniment to imported T-bone steak. In the dimming of the lights I took the opportunity to pile half-chewed flesh on the side of my plate, but a psychedelic shaft caught me red-handed. Iris looked like a gorgeous demon in the glow, her eyes alive with Hell only knew what mischief. But when the song stopped and the normal lighting came on, she looked as bored as ever, glancing impassively at my plate and then at Tanjore, whose eyes were fixed on the oozing gnashed gobs as on the most vicious kind of sacrilege.

I prayed that the waiters would wing my plate away, but they, like everybody else, were now mesmerised by a magician who had entered in a dragon-patterned gown and held a cellophane bag from which he first produced a long flat-headed green snake and then a squat flat-headed blonde girl. A whirlwind of disappearances and apparitions was now made, by the blonde or the snake or both, into and from Chinese puzzle boxes, sedan chairs, lacquered cabinets and charmers' baskets. Each climax was accompanied by high steely music. I glanced at Iris. She was yawning. Suddenly, however she sat up. The sorcerer was asking for a volunteer from the audience.

"Here," my hostess called peremptorily.

IT AMAZES ME NOW that I thought Iris was offering herself. *I* was the volunteer, of course. How could it have been otherwise? A glittering finger pointed out the fact. Tanjore nudged me out on to the stage, giving his boy-soprano giggle.

At first it was easy. All I had to do was to stand there, a fixed smile on my numb face, and be magicked away and back again; to surrender a ten dollar bill which was then torn into shreds and reconstituted out of my ear; to let my watch be smashed to smithereens so that it might be found whole and dangling in somebody's empty beer glass. Through all this the blonde stood solidly near me, grinning reassurance, the serpent wreathing her bosom. Then the magician made them both disappear so that I felt very lonely and exposed. Then the snake was brought back without its mistress. The illusionist pretended he had made a mistake. Looking round for somewhere to put the serpent, he draped it round my neck and disappeared amid the laughter of the audience.

I still marvel at the way I kept that sheer coil of muscle around me. Perhaps it was the compelling beauty of its subtle skin, neither dry or sweaty, unlike my own, neither cold nor hot. Perhaps it was the way it curved its flat head round to gaze into my face with unflinchingly objective golden eyes. I stood with him, in eternity it seemed, at the still centre of the room while its circumference jerked slowly round me, wafting strained mirth from dim new faces that looked exactly like the ones that had gone before.

A clash and a flash brought the sorcerer and his blonde back beside me and everybody was clapping madly. It was sad surrendering the snake now. I had been momentarily with God. But God seemed glad enough to snuggle back round the blonde's lardy bosom, so I slid weak-kneed into my seat.

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I wanted to go home but Iris was slightly enjoying herself now.

"You must see the striptease artiste," she said, and as if to clinch the argument, the Amazon leapt in, neurotically western with long sandy limbs and a tawny switch of hair. The mainly Chinese audience stared spell-bound, all in complex family-groups: wizened ochre ancients, plump parents ruddied with minimal alcohol, and apricot adolescents, their features limned on their immaculate skins as if by the brush of Yen-li-Pen. At the climax no sound came from them, merely a sense of taut consternation which showed itself in the dilation of a hundred epicanthic eye-lids. The applause was of the most mechanical kind.

"Did that rouse you too?" Iris asked, coolly getting up to go and paying the waiter from a man's wallet which she had rooted from her big hand-bag.

I bent my head in wise sadness, as if the world's ways were forgivable if foolish.

"Look at my husband. Can't you tell he's frustrated? He'll dream tonight about that woman."

We moved from ice-box hotel into furnace night, and I immediately felt certain fluey tremors play up and down my tissues.

Iris's occasional pointless chuckles from the back seat curdled my fever. I tried to think of bright—and right—things to say. But whatever one said to Iris was somehow made to seem wrong. When I observed how much I preferred eastern girls to western ones,

"Is *that* all you've come here for?" she rasped.

WHEN WE GOT back to the sari-shop Lakshmi was waiting up for us, her solemn eyes haunting ours to anticipate requirements.

"Milo," Iris specified, switching the fans to "fast" and dropping back on her foam-filled chair which hissed around her. Tanjore went to speak with Lakshmi in an interminable muttering of Tamil in the kitchen. "If only one could live in air-conditioned clothes."

"You should be back in West Bromwich," I teased.

"Exactly," was Iris's flat response as she reached forward to switch on the television. The last commercial of the day ran amok at her touch. A musical voice recommended Dunhill cigarettes in a mêlée of Malay. Then the National Anthem was heard at which Iris settled more deeply into her chair and gave her most irritable sigh. Then the screen went dead. Iris shrugged and raised her hand in despair as if to say she had not been expecting much but what little there was was taken away from her. I was thinking of the Hindu priest and I touched the almost obliterated spot between my brows. Lakshmi entered with the drinks. The Milo was sickeningly sweet with its swirls of Nestlé's milk.

"Don't you think that sort of thing is rather ridiculous?" Iris asked, indicating my face.

Assuming she meant the spot,

"I suppose to a Christian it is," I said, and I noticed Lakshmi's eyes flinch as she laid down Tanjore's cup.

"Aren't you a Christian then?"

I was happy to turn Iris's phrase back on her.

"Of course not." I smiled radiantly at Lakshmi who simply stared me through.

"Tell this girl not to stand about like a Zombie," Iris suddenly screeched.

I looked round wildly, thinking she was addressing me, but Tanjore had just come quietly in. He did as Iris bade, only in Tamil and a polite tone. His wife glared at him with ravishing scorn.

"Doesn't she speak English?" I ventured timidly.

"English? She doesn't speak *anything*. She is a complete ignoramus. I'm going to bed."

"WHAT IS YOUR estimation of my wife?" Tanjore inquired with a kind of nervous joy when she had gone. I think he would have been pleased with a percentage assessment, but,

"She is very beautiful," I merely replied.

"Oh she is, she is. You have hit the nail of the head. Vould you like night-cap?"

His train of thought was too quick for me and he had to hold up the whisky-bottle to make me understand.

"Oh, no thanks," I said hurriedly, unreflecting. "I've already had too much of everything."

"Iris does not like me to go to bed until she is asleep. She reads first."

So we stayed up for hours until Iris was

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likely to be asleep, with Tanjore taking gulp after gulp of neat whisky which had no effect on him. There were long silences disturbed only by his rhapsodies on Iris's beauty, and deep snoozy breaths from me.

"She is very lovely, yes."

"I am indeed lucky fellow."

"My friends all covet my wife."

"Her eyes remind me. . . ."

"Once I asked . . . perfect. . . ."

". . . me. . . ."

". . . her. . . ."

My lids closed. If I had died I could not have been more sealed off from Tanjore's words and world.

I AWOKE AT DAWN stretched on a bed. A slithering noise came from under it. I quaked, sure there was a cobra there. I strained through the half-light. Below me a human head with two black plaits was bent. Lakshmi was putting away her rush mat. I wondered if she had slept on the floor of my room all night. I wondered if she had carried me single-handed to the bed, dressed me in a sarong and laid me out. I put my head down again and, for some reason wholly contented, went back to sleep while Lakshmi padded to the kitchen to get ready for William and the hopeless new day.

When I at last got up, Tanjore was already in his shop and Lakshmi silently served me with pineapple, *dosai* and coffee while William played under the table with a toy truck, wheeling it over my vulnerable bare feet and back again, making violent revving noises, and farting now and then, also violently.

Iris was not to be seen. Presently, however, she emerged in a superb black and white beach suit.

"Ready?" she asked without preliminaries.

"What for?"

"Batu Feringgi. Everybody who comes to Penang goes there."

She said it as if life were not a pleasure but merely the doing of what was done.

Tanjore came up from below.

"Your sleep—was it good?"

I nodded.

"Did the girl give you breakfast?"

I nodded again.

Tanjore said all the things that to Iris had been superfluous.

"You would like to go to the beach?"

"But you'll come with us?" I asked, scarcely disguising a fearful note in my voice.

"Ah no. It is unfortunate. But business is business. Iris will escort you. She knows how to avoid water-snake."

"Besides," Iris flashed, not without her own citric streak of humour, "Lakshmi will be our chaperone."

"And William?"

"Villiam of course."

The farting angel revved up under the table and came driving his truck over everybody's feet, except Iris's: she smartly deflected him with her gold-painted big toe.

"Villiam likes to see man swim." Tanjore smiled encouragingly. "Iris too."

"But—"

"Yes?" Iris's eyes flashed at me.

I had been going to say I could not swim. I shook my head. If *everybody* went to the beach, I could conceal my inability among the other bathers.

THE BEACH was deserted, a far creamy strand hedged by coconut palms, with pearly islets palpitating in the heat, while on its cushion of gold water Kedah Peak sat like a grey god. I relieved Lakshmi of the picnic basket which she had automatically shouldered though already burdened by William and toys. The mother came slowly some way behind, her hair gleaming like Spanish Juice, her overpowering eyes and their general area of her face covered by sun-glasses. Iris ordered us into the shade of a tamarind, from which point, I was pleased to note, the shore could not be seen for the shelving of the sand. Lakshmi spread our things and never ceased ministering to all our needs, William's being legion. He yanked her tight plaits, scratched her drumstick wrists and punched her uncushioned ribs. Iris glanced casually at this torture and then settled back with her *Life International*. I began to unzip my trousers. Already wearing my swimming trunks, I saw no need to mask my undressing. But Iris glanced up and frowned. "Do you *mind*?" She flicked her finger at Lakshmi who handed me a sarong. I flushed heavily. Behind my back came a suppressed titter, but when I turned round all faces were as solemn as could be. I sped down to the sea, glad to be out of Iris's sight. Yet I longed to be the

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strong swimmer she had come to watch; I craved to impress her with *something*.

I THRASHED about in the water, thinking how easily I might have learned to swim if, as a boy, I had had such a sea as this to romp in. I felt like the god Visnu slumbering on the thousand-headed Sesa.

Thoughts of the serpentine Sesa made me raise my head suddenly, in trepidation. As I glanced towards the shore, I saw a slight brown figure with plaited hair sleek silently out of view over the sand-bank.

I splashed on to the incandescent sand and lay there, the sun's plaything, my mind skidding as if through its *samsara*, the ever-whirling wheel of my *karmas*. Had I *never* been a swimmer? Could I not call up this skill from some previous existence?

Men without love think only of self,
but the loving strip themselves
to the bone for others.

Tanjore's kind and somehow pathetic image came into my thoughts. And then Iris, smiling, glittering, smiling.

There she was, in fact, standing above me, smiling, glittering, smiling. She was in her bathing costume, a tight white sheath on her dark gold skin. Her limbs were northern, long and slim; her eyes and her hair were wonderfully Indian.

"You can't swim, can you?" she said.

"Did the girl tell you?"

She looked puzzled.

"Lakshmi? How could she? She has no tongue as far as I know. No, I saw your face change this morning when Tanjore told you I like to see men swim. Never mind, you can watch *me*."

She plunged and forged outward like a ship. She let her hair play freely on the water. I wished I could follow her into the fathoms, that would then overwhelm us.

"That's Lover's Island," she said, when she came out, squeezing and tossing her hair with a simplicity which took her a long way from her former bored self.

"Ah, all islands are Lovers' Islands, and all beaches are Beaches of Desire. It is just one of those things that tourists have to put up with."

She laughed. *At last* she laughed.

"Perhaps the lovers are sea-snakes. They infest those rocks."

"But you swam there."

"Why not? Come, I'll teach you."

She took my hand and led me into the water.

"Now, lie back. I'll support you."

I lay back, went under and trod upright, spluttering, frantic.

"You must have faith," she laughed.

I COULD HAVE moved mountains for her, the way she looked now, so free and joyous. But it took several tries before her light support finally left me floating and kicking my heels in simple gaiety. I followed her into the deeps nearer and nearer the islet.

My body urged itself towards her, but the thought of the snakes gripping me and biting me through miles of breathless ocean dragged me back. Still she called, so I paddled on. A wave came smack in my face. I lost footing and found myself beating and swallowing water. My body seemed to splay in all directions, but at last my legs and arms caught the sea's rhythm, in spite of me, and I surged forward. There were only a few yards of deep water and I was almost sorry to find my feet touching rocks by which I was able to clamber up to join Iris in her luminous paradise. She smiled unaffectedly and took my hand to balance herself. We expected each other to kiss each other. So we did. When we turned back to the mainland, Lakshmi was watching us from the shore which seemed ridiculously near after all the fuss I had made about getting here. We looked at Lakshmi and Lakshmi looked at us. Her sari was breeze-fluttered to one side of her slender body and she became the momentary incarnation of an adolescent goddess.

Iris slid down my body and into the sea. I made to follow but stepped back in panic, seeing some rubbery strands come wiggling through the foam. Having gained the mainland, Iris strode up the sand and slapped her servant's face, a pleasure in which William rushed to join her. I stood watching them across the infested channel.

I examined the water and saw that the rubbery threads were bits of seaweed. So I let myself down and paddled forward. No doubt snakes would keep themselves hidden till the perfect crafty moment. I have not been able to swim since that day, yet I reached the mainland more quickly than I had gone out, and

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I lay on the sand, my ribs strained like an open umbrella's.

Naturally, I told Tanjore it had been a lovely outing, and I sat back trying to cultivate an Iris-like indifference against the time when Lakshmi would tell him what had happened. But she must have kept our secret, for Tanjore remained his benevolent self and next day took us on a tour of the island. Along with my guilt I felt disappointment because there would be no chance for me to be alone with Iris. She looked, in her pink and silver suit, as rich with promise, as darkly delicious as Christmas cake under its icing. I stole glances back at her. She sat in perfect composure, but I was sure she was very aware of me. I had awakened her, I thought; I felt gratifyingly virile and spread my knees into a relaxed manly position.

"So, first we go to Crestwood Glades," Iris directed.

In this new suburb, which might have been on the edge of Sydney or Los Angeles, she became animated, pointing, amid the razor-finished villas and bungalows, to a newly-laid-out plot.

"There's ours."

She then enumerated the points which would make their bungalow "different", because, as she said, she "couldn't bear anything ordinary": silent air-conditioning, crazy concrete patio, cocktail-bar, double garage, etc., etc. It began to seem strange to me that I had kissed the lips that were saying these things and that I still had hopes of kissing them again.

It was a relief to get to the Aquarium where a confluence of astonishing and astonished creatures met our ignorant eyes with theirs. Man gazed in (or out) at fish and fish gazed out (or in) at man, and maybe fish like man wondered whoever could have conceived such colours and combinations of colour, such lunate, lanceolate and leptocephalic forms, such textures of skin and scale, ctenoid, cycloid or median predorsal, such softly respirating or whispering mouths, such palatines, preopercles and pelvic termini.

I WAS MOVED by Lakshmi's noiseless amazement as she pressed her nose against each watery glass, while William wrenched at her hand and kicked her ankles to wake her from her trance. Now and then my eyes met hers and there seemed to be recognition, though not of earthly kind, a communion of wonder at the imagination that had engendered Peacock Flounders, Cocoa Damsels, Stopflight Parrots and Blue Tangs. Perhaps Lakshmi thought, as I did, peering at the Foureye Butterfly, that people should be given caudal peduncles as beautiful as faces and made to feed on benthic crustaceans or brittle stars.

But she turned from all the brazen rarities, from the Yellowtail Snapper, Ocean Surgeon and Pygmy Angel, even from the poor measle-mottled Graysby, to fix her fellow-perceiving eye on the little Sea Horses who hovered meekly as if apologising for verticality in a horizontal world.

"Oh come on," Iris called, glancing distastefully at the Bermudan Slippery Dicks. "This place gives me the creeps."

William dashed to join her as she made for the exit. Lakshmi would have forced herself to follow had not Tanjore laid a kindly hand on her shoulder. She continued her sad contemplation of the sad Sea Horses.

Iris and William were slapping each other when we got outside. William scooted straight at Lakshmi both for protection and an unreciprocating target.

"Tanjore doesn't care that our child is a monster," Iris sighed, dusting herself down and scratching at a mark on her trousers.

Tanjore smiled a monster-accepting smile and said,

"Villiam is unique character."

I thought William ought to have been fed to the crocodiles whom we watched as we ate our lunch. They stretched greyly below us on their "farm", grinning into the eye of the Almighty Hypnotist, snoozing on the rocks of a weary brown stream, perhaps aware but past caring that they were meant to be made into shoes and handbags for sophisticated savages. As I ate and grew uncomfortable with sandy, spiky, luscious sea-foods, I noticed how Lakshmi had her eyes fixed on the bumpy bark-like saurians who, juveniles as they were, looked at least half as old as earth.

"In India," Tanjore smiled, "when they open a crocodile, they find human relics inside. Wrist vatches, jewellery, bunches of keys. I saw a pair of gold-rimmed spectacles

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once that had come out of a crocodile's stomach. Quite complete they were."

Lakshmi and I fixed our eyes on Iris's gold bracelets and ear-rings.

"Isn't it an Indian custom," I asked, "to wear one's wealth?"

Iris's face showed fury. Tanjore laughed and nodded.

"Yes, and a crocodile's to swallow it."

"Silly crocodile," Iris shot at him. "He's just like you—he doesn't know what he's worth."

"*Poor* crocodile, you mean." I glanced involuntarily at Lakshmi whose full gaze beggared mine. "He hardly knows anything at all."

"Maybe he's better off that vay," Tanjore murmured glisteningly. "Or maybe he knows more than you think. Shall ve press on?"

If he had added "regardless" as Vindran had done, I should not have felt so stricken. His wistful glance made me feel I had wronged him deeply at Batu Feringgi.

Even Iris seemed agitated, for when we got back to the Toyota, she climbed into the driver's seat and whirled us off at hair-raising speed round the island's slithery highway. Fearful of moving any part of me except my eyes, I saw all the sights of the island as if from a strait-jacket.

AT LAST WHEN we had nearly come full circle, we stopped. In the Botanical Gardens. The monkeys fled from us, their black neurotic faces frowning and jabbering and their long arms pointing as at untouchables.

"Look, there's a new attraction," cried Iris, as if everything else about the Botanical Gardens was obsolete. She slid her long pink-sheathed legs out of the car and joined the crowd that stood caterwauling around a small elephant. Coming up behind her, I saw that one of its back legs was tethered by a thick rope. The leg looked like a capstan on which the world was anchored.

"They must have brought it from India," Tanjore said almost in awed whisper, and Lakshmi pressed forward, hand-in-hand with William, to make her usual meticulous examination.

A tall handsome Sikh in a beautiful turquoise turban and white coat stood by the elephant, his curly beard twinkling with his eyes' twinkle as he invited people to step up and be photographed on the elephant's back. And occasionally a small grave boy hosed water at the elephant who trumpeted thanks and sloshed his free legs in the grey pool of mud forming behind him.

It was such a small animal, an elephant equivalent of the grave little lad, and it seemed wrong that he should have to take a succession of Australian matrons on his back. They grinned ready ruddy grins and waved big blotchy arms at each other's cameras, squawking.

"Not yet—wait till I'm ready—now, now."

They shouted each other's names, names like Eve, Marge and Dot, and made remarks calculated to guarantee normality in a not-quite-normal world. And everybody else accepted—for the moment—their joky view of it. The Sikh's eyes danced and the small boy suddenly showed the gleaming convexity of his teeth. Only Lakshmi stood serious, Lakshmi and the elephant as he politely collapsed his front legs to let each lady hoist up on him from the Sikh's steely arms. Like Lakshmi's, the elephant's eyes took in everything and gave nothing away, even when he lifted his trunk to accept the bun which each lady dangled teasingly above his head.

Having more than satisfied the Australians, the Sikh motioned to Iris that she should go up next.

"No," she shuddered.

"If you won't go, then Lakshmi must. I want to take a photo."

Iris must have guessed how much I *wanted* to see Lakshmi on the elephant. She alone seemed to me to have the right to such an elevation. She alone had the inalienable rapport, the link of proper humility. Knowing this, as I say, Iris suddenly and wilfully pushed Lakshmi aside and put herself between the Sikh's arms. I must admit she looked splendid: she was where she belonged, beauty in the arms of magnificence.

It was where she should have stayed, allowing Lakshmi to take *her* natural place. For the elephant sensed something improper as soon as he straightened his forelegs and stood waiting for the bun to appear. It was when I took up my position with the camera in front of him. The photograph I took was not the one I intended to take. Iris—bored as

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ever—was dangling the bun. At that moment the elephant's eye caught mine and his look seemed to take the strength out of me. He lunged his young tusks forward and up. Then his back legs began to crumple themselves, the grey folds pleating like discarded trousers. Iris's hand clawed out to grasp the raised trunk but slowly, and not ungracefully, she slid down the rough rotund back, over the inadequate tail and, plop, into the private mudbath. The elephant straightened up as if from a good job done. Iris absorbed the grey ooze as if she were a rag in a bowl of latex. Above all the rushing helpful activity which then took place there rose a harsh screechy laugh. Nobody could have remained deaf to it, but all pretended it was not happening. Lakshmi's eyes were gleaming and her body was convulsed. I realised it was the first sound I had ever heard her make. And I feared, from the way Iris came at her like a wet plaster statue brought suddenly to raging life, that it might be the last. The din of beating filled the air: Iris beat Lakshmi with grey slimy fists; and the Sikh lashed out at his elephant. Yet Lakshmi went on laughing: for the life of her she couldn't help it. The monkeys came back to see what was happening.

TANJORE APPEARED in the doorway as I was packing.

"You will not forget your stay in Penang," he smiled.

"Neither will you. You'll be relieved when I've gone, I should think."

"Only English people are relieved when their guests depart."

"Lakshmi told you about Batu Feringgi?"

"Batu Feringgi?"

"I kissed Iris there."

He nodded.

"She told me."

"Lakshmi?"

"Iris."

"You don't *mind*?"

"Ah," he breathed, and there was a long silence. Then, "The first time it happened I hit her everyvhere and she had haemorrhage. I could not believe I am so wiolent. Then I said to myself, 'Iris is not Indian. She is European lady. Her behaviour is according to those vays.' As yours is, my friend."

I thought for a moment he was going to hit me everywhere till *I* had haemorrhage. So, hurriedly,

"What about Lakshmi?" I asked. "You won't sack her, will you?"

He laid his hand on my hot arm.

"The girl always stays. She has novhere else to go."

When we entered the sitting-room, Vindran was there with Iris. They were absorbed in the *Dick Van Dyke Show*. Our departure was ill-timed, since Iris made it clear that she did not want her programme interrupted. She signalled Lakshmi to give me a drink, more to silence than refresh me. Then, delving her chin in her palm and hunching forward, she glared at the television screen, emitting her stark laugh now and then. Her farewell could not have been more perfunctory. In the context of Dick Van Dyke, or perhaps any other, it was nothing to her that she might never see me again. Possibly, like William, she could not wait to get rid of me. When Tanjore told him I was going he rushed at me angel-head-first and butted me towards the door.

Tanjore led the way through the shop and helped Vindran and me to put our things and ourselves into the Volkswagen. We shook hands warmly and I felt sad that I should never have the chance to get to know his kind, candid nature better.

Turning to peer through the car's narrow back window, I noticed that a new figure had joined Tanjore at the shop-door. Two black plaits framed its dark poker-face, and its brown stick of a wrist was raised in a still gesture from the slightly ruffled sari.

"So how was Penang?" Vindran asked.

I turned, eager to tell him what I had learned: that the gods are not the gorgeous who enslave, but the suffering who serve and are dumb.

"Very nice," was what in fact I said.

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Dannie Abse

Two Poems

In the Theatre

(*a true incident*)

"Only a local anaesthetic was given because of the blood pressure problem. The patient, thus, was fully awake throughout the operation. But in those days—in 1938, *in Cardiff, when I was Lambert Rogers' dresser—they could not locate a brain tumour with precision. Too much normal brain tissue was destroyed as the surgeon crudely searched for it, before he felt the resistance of it. . . . All somewhat hit or miss. . . . One operation I shall never forget. . . ."*

(Dr Wilfred Abse)

Sister saying—"Soon you'll be back in the ward,"
sister thinking—"Only two more on the list,"
the patient saying—"Thank you, I feel fine":
small voices, small lies, nothing untoward,
though, soon, he would blink again and again
because of the fingers of Lambert Rogers,
rash as a blind man's, inside his soft brain.

If items of horror can make a man laugh
then laugh at this: one hour later, the growth
still undiscovered, ticking its own wild time;
more brain mashed because of the probe's braille
path;
Lambert Rogers desperate, fingering still;
his dresser thinking, "Christ! Two more on the list,
a cisternal puncture and a neural cyst."

Then, suddenly, the cracked record in the brain,
a ventriloquist voice that cried, "You sod,
leave my soul alone, leave my soul alone,"—
the patient's dummy lips moving to that refrain,
the patient's eyes too wide. And, shocked,
Lambert Rogers drawing out the probe
with nurses, students, sister, petrified.

"Leave my soul alone, leave my soul alone,"
that voice so arctic and that cry so odd
had nowhere else to go—till the antique
gramophone wound down and the words began
to blur and slow, ". . . leave . . . my . . . soul . . .
alone,"
to cease at last when something other died.
And silence matched the silence under snow.

Peachstone

I do not visit his grave. He is not there.
Out of hearing, out of reach. I miss him here,
seeing hair grease at the back of a chair
near a firegrate where his spit sizzled,
or noting, in the cut-glass bowl, a peach.

For that night his wife brought him a peach,
his favourite fruit, while the sick light glowed,
and his slack, dry mouth sucked, sucked, sucked,
with dying eyes closed—perhaps for her sake—
till bright as blood the peachstone showed.

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Jean-François Revel

Proust & the Snobs

WE ARE SNOBS when our attitude to a human being (I leave aside snobbery towards animals, a complex subject on which, I am told, several doctoral theses are in course of preparation) does not depend directly on a particular person or on the impression that his presence makes on us, but on a third force which is foreign to the qualities and failings which belong to him personally. The third factor may be nobility, money, power, the possession of a car which exceeds a certain speed, a horse, a dog, a sporting or a literary reputation, or even a university title; membership (past, present or future) of some corporate body: School, Administration, Association, Army. Or, again, it may depend on the fact that he stayed in this or that country, town, or even hotel; on having gone in for hunting, shooting, fishing, skiing, Alpine mountaineering, yachting, the white slave traffic, a foreign language; on having been present at congresses, or (in other milieux) on having been a thief, a murderer or done time in prison. Man finds grounds for snobbery in everything. Thus, when in the company of drug addicts, one might find oneself witnessing the contempt of opium-smokers for morphinomaniacs, or of morphinomaniacs for ether-drinkers, etc.

TO MARK *the hundredth anniversary of Proust's birth, Jean-François Revel's critical study—of which this article forms a part—will shortly be published by the Library Press (New York) and Hamish Hamilton (London). Revel, the well-known French philosopher and critic, is the author of "Without Marx or Jesus" which is a best-seller in the U.S.A. (Doubleday, with an introduction by Mary McCarthy). Revel writes a regular column for "L'Express" in Paris, and he contributed an article entitled "A Letter to a Certain Paris Literary Critic" to the June 1969* ENCOUNTER. *The translation of the Revel text is by Martin Turnell.*

In a large town in Texas there is a district where, as a result of a tacit understanding between landowners and real estate agents, nobody ever sells an inch of land to people whose fortune is valued at less than a million dollars. Now, from a strictly practical point of view, the "residential" and luxury aspect of the district could certainly be preserved at a lower price. What conditions it in this instance is an image, a totem, an exclusiveness, which for that matter is something that happens in so many American cities where only a few yards separate that part of the city where it is good form to live from that part where residence would mean your exclusion from a certain society notwithstanding the fact that, so far as the eye can see, there is no difference in the attractiveness or the cleanliness of the two sectors of the district, which are next door to one another, and that only the difference in the rents or prices marks the passage from one to the other.

It would be easy and tedious to extend the list. The essential thing is that an idea is interposed between ourselves and our fellows and hangs over our heads. No matter if the person to whom we happen to be talking shows the most blatant signs of stupidity and vulgarity; they do not register with us as such because we are dominated by the knowledge that he is a fencing champion, a contributor to *Time* Magazine, a French ambassador, or the head of Girard's lollipop business. The most boring person does not bore us any longer. Through him we come into contact with the Idea and, as M. Verdurin remarks, he is "in" (note the vocabulary of magical or Platonic participation). At the very end of the novel, Mme Verdurin, now Princesse de Guermantes and almost moribund (because for the snob like the politician there is no retirement age) cries in *Time Regained*, "Yes, that's it, we will forgather! We will summon the clan! I love this younger generation, so intelligent, so ready to join in! Ah! what a mujishian you are!" Right up

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to the last, as the author observes, she was determined to "join in", to "summon the clan."

AMONG THE CRUDEST GROUNDS of discrimination are first, aristocratic or official titles, power, and money. But it would be possible to draw up a list of millions of other principles of discrimination. The more complicated a civilisation grows, the more diverse the criteria of snobbery become—with wealth and power going by the board, at any rate in appearance—the more snobbery multiplies its facets, turns out to be changeable, subdivides, disguises itself and goes as far as to turn itself inside out. The anti-snobbery of the snobs is nothing in fact except a variety of snobbery which Proust catalogues in the same way as other things when he writes, for example, that the Duchesse de Guermantes *"reprit son point de vue de femme du monde, c'est-à-dire de contemptrice de la mondanité* (resumed the normal point of view of a society woman, the point of view, that is to say, of a woman who affects to despise society)."

In other societies snobbery remains robust and simple: it needs distinctive systems of etiquette, visible signs. In Italy, a person is condemned to an inferior existence if he is without a title, if he is reduced to himself. It is always a last resource, a sign of rudeness, simply to address some one as "Sir". He must be Doctor, Engineer, Commander, Barrister, Professor, Accountant, etc. The story is told of an unfortunate man who was run over by a lorry and killed because for fear of vexing him a passer-by who had seen the danger dared not shout a warning by addressing him simply as *"Signore!"* He took a chance and called him *"Commendatore!"* The victim, not being a commander, did not look round and lost his life. Every form of snobbery is based on a preliminary conformity without which it would be swamped and in a perpetual state of confusion. It therefore assumes the uncritical acceptance of certain values. The blindness of the acceptance can go as far as to make us admit a religious respect for a social hierarchy from which we ourselves are in fact excluded. It is the snobbery of servants, so well described by Proust. It is also in the societies of the great landowners the worship of the peasants for their masters and the practices of which they are the victims. The need to be classed, even if it means being placed in the lowest class, makes men cherish any form of class distinction.

SNOBBERY recomposes, inside a circle limited by an artificial frontier, the entire scale of human qualities and feelings. Outside the circle a person may possess virtues, be kind or intelligent, but to use the language of the bureaucrats, he will never be given "title" to these virtues. Conversely, "kindness", "courage", "brilliance", etc., grow infinitely if they flourish in an ambassador who subscribes to the Idea. A boy who is "very brilliant", "very cultivated", "very musical", "very upright", "very funny", etc., does not speak, express himself or conduct himself in the same way, with the same intonation, the same urgency with the holder of a title as he does with some one who is without an official position. The establishment of a title will depend as much on a whole social class as on a group reduced to a handful of people or even a single family. We know the kind of auto-snobbery that unites members of certain families in mutual admiration which is as tough as it is unmotivated and which indeed sometimes fails to prevent them from tearing one another to pieces. It matters little: by dividing humanity into those who are "in" and those who are not, snobbery makes life easier for us; it frees us from the obligation to feel and pass judgment in each particular case, and it joins our self-respect to the boundless respect that we display towards a limited number of other individuals.

EVERY CATEGORY OF SNOBS therefore suggests a secret society whose cohesion depends on the fierce protection of a non-existent treasure. In calling the treasure "non-existent", I am obviously speaking of the justifications and the pretexts that snobbery assumes in the field of moral, intellectual or aesthetic values. At bottom, the treasure does indeed exist because every form of snobbery defends, at any rate in its beginnings, the interests of a class, a group, a clan or a coterie. In the last analysis, in the microscopic scale, there is only one form of snobbery: money and its equivalents—power, influence, fame. But there is a very large gap between what we might call the root of an attitude and its proliferation. As Marx showed in *The 18th Brumaire,* every moral system acquires a sort of autonomous power which is more durable than the causes that inspired it. It can survive the necessities which gave rise to it, or which it resisted, and influence in turn its own supports by developing on its own account and more wildly.

By swamping on a large scale its most classic forms, like so-called fashionable life, and its monstrous forms like anti-Semitism and racialism, snobbery becomes fathomless and polymorphous. It is always present in everybody, even if in the form of an imperceptible residue, and subtly corrupts our attitudes. It falsifies the behaviour even of people who set their faces against it most firmly (there is a snobbery inside the Communist Party and, of course, inside the Catholic Church), or who in an attempt to defend themselves gauchely adopt the opposite standpoint in which

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we can read in its entirety, like the reflection in a mirror of back-to-front handwriting, this admission: fraternising with low company obviously means that you are a snob. Snobbery colours all personal relations in law-abiding societies because it reproduces to the fullest extent permitted by law and interest that vast edifice of inclusions and exclusions in which ethnology has discovered a phenomenon that is fundamental to every form of society. One is snobbish towards a person whom, in certain archaic social systems where there only exist two categories of human beings, relations and enemies, one would normally kill.

AS THE DETECTOR and extremely accurate recorder of the faintest traces of snobbery to be found in nature, whether crystallised, fossilised, liquefied or gaseous, Proust perceives their ubiquity, mimicry and ramifications. He amuses himself without ever growing tired by deciphering, with the help of an anti-snobbery grid invented by himself, their purpose and their actions. Wherever he happens to be, the first thing that his eye and his sensibility perceive in the people he is watching is the dark nook in which the secret behind the grimace is palpitating. He at once fixes on the secret, isolates it, drives it to the wall and enjoys watching the holder or the candidate for the position working himself up, interminably retracing the triangular route which takes him from the person or persons present to the Value of which he is the slave, returning at last, after consulting this Value, to his own feelings (if one can put it like that).

Sometimes Proust even prolongs the experiment and sadistically tortures the snob. He lets Mme de Cambremer, who is an intellectual snob, give herself away by her condemnation of Poussin who she imagines is still out of fashion. Then he remarks, casually, (in *Cities of the Plain*), that Degas is very fond of the Poussins at Chantilly:

> *"Ouais?" répondit-elle. "Je ne connais pas ceux de Chantilly . . . mais je peux parler de ceux du Louvre, qui sont des horreurs." "Il les admire aussi énormément." "Il faudra que je les revoie. Tout cela est un peu ancien dans ma tête", répondit-elle après un instant de silence, et comme si le jugement favorable qu'elle allait certainement bientôt porter sur Poussin devait dépendre, non de la nouvelle que je venais de lui communiquer, mais de l'examen supplémentaire et cette fois définitif, qu'elle comptait faire subir aux Poussin du Louvre, pour avoir la faculté de se déjuger.*
>
> "Indeed? I don't know the ones at Chantilly", said Mme de Cambremer, ". . . but I can speak about the ones in the Louvre, which are appalling." "He admires them immensely too." "I must look at them again. My impressions of them are rather distant", she replied after a moment's silence, and as though the favourable opinion which she was certain, before very long, to form of Poussin would depend, not upon the information that I had just communicated to her, but upon the supplementary and, this time, final examination that she intended to make of the Poussins in the Louvre in order to be in a position to change her mind.

And in her dreamy look, we see already the dawn of a sudden change of view which in a fortnight's time will infallibly lead her to admire Poussin. Morel himself, so unresponsive and so little affected by the contempt of other people, also has an Achilles heel: the sacrosanct violin class at the Conservatoire. The whole world can take him for a dirty little cad for all he cares—the only thing that worries him is the fear that something might come out about him at the Rue Bergère.

WHAT BLINDNESS has sometimes prompted people to treat Proust as a society novelist who though exceptional is still a novelist whose chief merit is to have extracted something profound from the superficial, to have transformed unrewarding material into something human—a sort of Saint-Simon of the upper middle class?

Saint-Simon believes in the reality of the aristocracy of the blood, but every day he is struck by their paltriness and their misdeeds which are like a bombshell to his faith in them, rock it to its very foundations, make its moral system untenable. This explains the bitterness and ferocity, the sardonic indignation of the *Memoirs*. Where Saint-Simon/Alceste suffers, Proust/Philinte is all irony, sensitive to the sheer oddity of people.

Some people claim that Proust describes aristocratic and society life because it is interesting in itself; others think that being half-Jewish he was fascinated by something to which he would never really have been admitted. These two interpretations would be perfectly proper on the part of people who had never opened *Remembrance of Things Past*. If the first of them is correct, it is equally correct to say that *La Farce de Maître Pathelin*[1] is a study of the state of the Law in the fifteenth century. As for the second, it is the result of the unimaginative application of scraps of psycho-analysis which maintain that everything we do is designed to defend us against a strong inclination to do the opposite, or to delude ourselves by concealing our irritation at not being able to do it. Cervantes probably harboured a secret love and a nostalgic tenderness for novels of chivalry.

But Proust's tone does not deceive. There is no hint of affection at the heart of his satire. Besides, it is not a matter of simple satire in his case, which

[1] The authorship of this play, which was written in 1464 and is sometimes described as "the first French comedy", is uncertain, but it may have been a Norman priest-poet named Guillaume Alecis. *Tr.*

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would amount to an assumption that the author had begun by taking seriously the things at which he is now tilting. For if it were no more than that, we should not be able to understand why we can always re-read with the same pleasure the same pages about the stupidity of M. de Norpois or the sly selfishness of the Guermantes, nor why readers who have never met specimens of these social types take an interest in Proust's descriptions of them. In order to bite, "demystification" presupposes mystification. The force of Proustian satire, like Molière's satire on preciosity, is linked to something else and thrusts its roots much more deeply into the ground trodden by the individuals at whose expense it is exercised. *Remembrance of Things Past* is neither a novel intended to compensate the disappointed or persecuted snob nor even the chronicle of the twilight of a society: the cruel and sceptical description of social life at which the experienced pen of Mme Gyp excelled—the novelist whom Nietzsche prized so highly—or the spiteful, nagging pen of the Goncourts whose diary sounds in this domain the hour of disillusion, the discarding of the masks and the appearance of the grimaces.

Proust never had to discover the limits of the "polite world" because he never believed in the "polite world." More precisely, he believed in the wit, in the charm of the "polite world" before he came to know it, and his illusions vanished at the very moment of his first contact with reality. Chapter II of *Guermantes Way* (if one can speak in the case of Proust of genuine "chapters"), "THE WIT OF THE GUERMANTES, AS DISPLAYED BEFORE THE PRINCESSE DE PARME", is written expressly for that reason. His letter to Reynaldo Hahn, in which he derides the Parisian Egerias and does a pastiche of the style of their party invitations, shows that the man who at the age of twenty contributed to the *Revue Blanche* did not have to withdraw after a period in "polite society." It is unusual, however, to find readers of Proust who do not believe that *Remembrance of Things Past* contains at the same time as criticism a discreet admission of admiration and a melancholy farewell.

THIS AMOUNTS TO confusing Proust with, for example, Gabriel Louis Pringué, the sympathetic author of *Trente ans de dîners en ville*. Pringué believes in the "polite society", in the perfect image that people who never entered it formed for themselves in 1900. Although he did enter it, he looks on it in the same way that they did. For him the salons are peopled by women who are "devilishly" pretty (the adverb is his); the queens always display a queenly bearing; fashionable authors make their entry by "throwing out three or four witty remarks" in exactly the same way that children imagine that the hero of a Western never makes a move without firing a few pistol shots. The duchesses are always very "gracious", the marchionesses have a gift for repartee which is enough to fell an ox for you. Pringué quotes ecstatically a large number of "witty remarks" and "repartees" which were famous in the fashionable society of five continents between 1900 and 1914, which are so exasperatingly inept and in which it is impossible to discover even in their foetal stage the tiniest hint of anything really witty, with the result that his book runs the risk of being taken one of these days for a melancholic man's indictment in the manner of Tacitus's *Annals*.

On the moral plane, Pringué believes that there are good people who are wholly good and bad people who are wholly bad, as there are in the *chansons de geste* and the Westerns. The fact of the matter is that Pringué has written a sort of Western about fashionable society. He believes in the virtues of men of the world as a child is certain in advance that Davy Crockett or Billy the Kid will always be brave and will never miss their target. Alas! virtue does not always triumph. We only have to read the shattering page in which Pringué indulges in a long lamentation over the fact that newly arrived ladies without any legitimate position in society manage to work their way, simply on account of their money, into the presidencies of charitable societies and organisations for good works.

Lastly, on the metaphysical plane, to belong to what he calls the "upper crust of society" is, according to Pringué, a guarantee that the person possesses the qualities of intelligence, beauty, and goodness which are inherent in the individuals themselves and inalienable (in the same way that the Scholastics thought that Dryness, Humidity, Warmth and Cold were properties belonging to the very essence of certain bodies). When speaking, for example, of a woman who is *"diablement jolie"*, he writes: "Her figure was the figure of a genuine statue." Thus for Pringué (*1*) There exist genuine and false statues; (*2*) only genuine statues have a good figure; (*3*) women who do not belong to the "upper crust of society" resemble false statues.

They are, of course, all points of view which must be ascribed to simplicity rather than to malice. I shall not dwell any longer on a writer to whom I intend later on to devote a full-length study.

ALTHOUGH TOO BRIEF, these *aperçus* do at least enable us to say that Proust's book is more than the converse of Pringué's. *Remembrance of Things Past* does not bear the same resemblance to *Trente ans de dîners en ville* that *Don Quixote* does to

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Amadis; in the present context, as in many others, it is much more the converse of *La Comédie humaine.*

For when it is a question of believing in the fundamental excellence of individuals who comprise the nobility, in the superiority of the human substance of the women of the Faubourg Saint-Germain, Balzac displays a simple faith. As for Saint-Simon, he has to go as far as the Spanish court in order to find an etiquette after his own heart, a ceremonial whose visible ordering reflects and translates into material terms the inequalities of rank and blood, so true is it that the snobbish dream is to realise in external objects and to demonstrate by the choice of uniforms the hierarchy that he would like to believe is founded on human nature itself. Driven on by the obsession that rank depends on the place to which one has a right in the chapel or at a ceremony, on the right to have one's hat on, to cross or not to cross a threshold—in short, on topography—Saint-Simon goes as far as to write: "Madrid is a great and handsome city whose unequal situation, much of it standing on a very steep slope, has perhaps given rise to the kind of distinction of which I am about to speak."[2]

At the opposite pole, Proust does not even attempt to justify society life, as people often do, by setting out to show that, without deserving it, the snobs nevertheless serve as ornaments, useless but delightful, in any well-ordered society. No novel destroys more simply than his the legend that leisure, wealth, and confinement within a narrow circle of personal relationships create the conditions which favour the flowering of qualities of mind and elegance of manners. In a sketch for the character of Charlus, in which he is known as M. de Quercy, we read: "He went to Paris. He was in his twenty-fifth year, extremely good-looking and, *for a man of fashion, witty.*"[3] After the lack of wit, ignorance: "*the extraordinary ignorance of all these people*"—the people who in *Time Regained* are present at the Princesse de Guermantes' morning party.

Thus it is not simply out of psychological interest, but out of an ethnological curiosity that Proust describes in detail and reproduces mercilessly the manner of speech of the people of fashion. The language of people who are false is always false in itself because it has no natural centre and, not flowing from any source, is made up of twisted scraps like the streamers of silver paper in Provençal cradles. The bad French of the Duc de Guermantes (Françoise's "bloomers" are preferable), when so many working-class people like Jupien, for example, speak perfectly naturally a correct and elegant language, does not, however, fill us with the same *malaise* as the vulgarities of vocabulary and syntax, the mixture of learned words misunderstood, the chunks of slang, the familiar and affected expressions, the suggestive silences, which so many society people seem to use in order to excuse themselves for not possessing either a language or a tongue and which we find in the propositions put to the narrator by Gilberte de Saint-Loup:

> *Mais comment venez-vous dans ces matinées si nombreuses? . . . Vous retrouver dans une grande tuerie comme cela, ce n'est pas ainsi que je vous schématisais? Ce tes, je m'attendais à vous voir partout ailleurs qu' à un des grands tralalas de ma tante, puisque tante il y a . . .*
>
> But how do you come to be at a party of this size . . . To find you in a great slaughter of innocents like this doesn't fit in at all with my picture of you. In fact, I should have expected to find you anywhere rather than at one of my aunt's kettle-drums because of course she is my aunt . . .

Proust is as unimpressed as he could be by aristocracy and wealth; as alien as one can be to the idea even of a social élite. Everywhere he exposes the silliness and the vulgarity of society people and if we pay special attention to the demonstration it is because it goes without saying that even though it is continued, it remains in the margin of the story and never itself determines its course.

In *The Captive*, however, he is explicit in his declaration of contempt at the moment when he describes the musical evening which Baron de Charlus organises at Mme Verdurin's in honour of Morel. We remember that at the request of the "patroness" Charlus's invitations were confined almost exclusively to people belonging to his own world who behave so badly that, in order to revenge herself, Mme Verdurin persuades Morel at the end of the evening to drop Charlus:

> *Ce qui perdit M. de Charlus, ce fut la mauvaise éducation, si fréquente dans ce monde, des gens qu'il avait invités. Entendant parler de Mlle Vinteuil, plus d'un disait, "Ah! la fille à la sonate? Montrez-la-moi." Un duc pour montrer qu'il s'y connaissait, déclara, "C'est très difficile à bien jouer."*
>
> What ruined M. de Charlus that evening was the ill-breeding—so common in their class—of the people whom he had invited and who were now beginning to arrive . . . Hearing some mention of Mlle Vinteuil . . . more than one of them said: "Ah! The sonata-man's daughter? Shew me her" . . . A Duke, in order to shew that he knew what he was talking about, declared: "It is a difficult thing to play well."

And Proust concludes with these words (in *The Captive*):

> *Le monde étant le royaume du néant, il n'y a, entre les mérites des différentes femmes du monde, que des*

[2] *Memoirs,* Ch. LXVI.
[3] *By Way of Sainte-Beuve,* p. 166 (italics added).

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degrés insignifiants, que peuvent seulement majorer les rancunes ou l'imagination d'un M. de Charlus.

The social world being the realm of nullity, there exist between the merits of women in society only insignificant degrees, which are at best capable of rousing to madness the rancours or the imagination of M. de Charlus.

IT IS ALWAYS COMIC to find that a work is regarded obstinately, sometimes for several centuries like Mantegna's *Parnassus*, as a piece of special pleading in favour of the very ideas it set out to refute and the characters whom it represents as being odious or grotesque. One of these days *Das Kapital* may perhaps come to be described as a hymn which shows with veiled sensibility and a tender irony the charm of the working classes' living conditions in the nineteenth century in the same way that at present the term "Proustian" is applied to anyone who cultivates external signs of refinement, to any ephebe at the Quai d'Orsay who whispers a toneless French, to every bluestocking swooning with complications, to every Herculean agitator who invents a neurosis and though possessing plenty of blood, makes a point of staying in bed until eleven in the evening in order to be more like Proust who was a dying man when he adopted the practice.

In spite of the qualities that he recognises in her from time to time, the character on whom Proust definitely comes down hardest is the Duchesse de Guermantes. He displays more harshness when finally trampling her underfoot than he shows when crushing the Duke. For the Duke is all of a piece, sharply circumscribed by his titles, his position in society, his pleasures, his money, his selfishness. He makes no pretence of cultivating a different moral code from the one which suits him. The Duchess, on the other hand, is a double agent. Proust begins by displaying towards her the sort of indulgence from which a woman, who is practically devoid of wit, benefits when acquiring an official reputation in society as the author of witty remarks. The *mot* itself is only responsible for a tenth part of the laughter of those present; the other nine-tenths are due to the powerful social position of the Guermantes who entertain people in the manner in which a good-natured boss manages, during a dinner, to "fuse" the laughter of his employees. For when we look at them carefully, we find that the famous "*mots* of Oriane" are absolutely idiotic. They seldom go beyond a boring play on words. When quoting them, Proust does deliberately what Pringué had done without realising he was doing it: he shows what a low price is sufficient to acquire in a social milieu falsified by snobbery the reputation of being a great wit. He cruelly describes in detail the quackery of the Duchess who repeats her own *mots* to a succession of audiences and gives the impression of preventing herself from doing so by pretending to have forgotten them, allowing her hand to be forced by the Duke, for the pair of them work in partnership. They have a single motive, but a thousand pretexts for their preferences and their actions: the Duchess makes out that she is a bohemian, but she marries as though by chance, and with the help of "the family genius" the richest *parti* in France. She claims to be a connoisseur of literature and art, but is only capable of repeating a mass of clichés. (She knows that Proust is a writer and during the Princesse de Guermantes' party in *Time Regained* she says to him solemnly: "Ah! I understand, you have come in order to *observe*!")

In Proust's *Letters to Reynaldo Hahn* we can read his pastiches of the Comtesse Greffulhe which reveal a young Proust who is as little of a dupe as the future narrator of *Remembrance of Things Past*. Because Proust has drawn portraits of society people and "artistic" men of letters, there has been a tendency to confuse the author and his subject. We forget that if Proust's style is dense, complex, heavy-laden—or sometimes, at any rate, because it often has an airy lightness—it always remains perfectly simple, is essentially and profoundly natural. From beginning to end there is not a single example in *Remembrance of Things Past* of affectation or preciosity, not a single archaism or a single "elegant" turn of speech.

FINALLY, IN THE DOMAIN in which knowledge of the world verges on morality, Oriane professes the cult of friendship, but behaves revoltingly to the dying Swann. Then, after his death, she is false to his memory when in *The Sweet Cheat Gone* she invites Gilberte Swann, who by adoption has become Gilberte de Forcheville, to lunch and insinuates by her attitude that she had only known the Jew, Charles Swann, very slightly—she who for years had been his "greatest friend."

For the narrator of *Remembrance of Things Past*, the Duchesse de Guermantes' charm existed at a time when he did not yet know her personally, when she was the beloved creation of his imagination whom he followed in the street before he had ever spoken to her. But is it not one of the most deliberate effects of the story that the charm vanishes at the first dinner, at the very first conversation with her? All that is left is a nasty snob who believes that she is everything that she is not, who claims to take an interest in everything except the one thing which really interests her: her position in society. For that is the true nature of snobbery; the snob reduces all values to a single one, at the same time persuading himself that he judges every case disinterestedly in the name of the love of truth and quality with a high idea of

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human nature. Legrandin takes himself for a poet, a lover of nature, a hermit, when in fact he only dreams of being "seen with" this or that person. The Verdurins claim to have set up their salon in accordance with the principle of impartiality, seeking people of true talent, but the artists who stop visiting or, worse still, who die (two unpardonable ways of "leaving") cease at once in their eyes to have any talent at all and become "bores." The Verdurins clearly belong to the supreme category, to auto-snobbery; they are snobs in themselves.

ALTHOUGH SNOBBERY APPEARS to be intransigent and to pay no attention to perennial values, it is in fact a slave to the fluctuations of fortune, situations, celebrity, and is condemned to inflict continual denials on itself. The principal heroes of Proust find themselves at the feet of (or even marry) people to whom twenty years earlier they would not have wished to be introduced. Bloch, Rachel, Gilberte, Odette, Mme Verdurin take the Faubourg Saint-Germain by storm by means of *coucheries* and money. Morel, the most cunning and the most dishonest character in the book, is called as a witness in a law-suit where his high reputation for honourable behaviour, acquired through his social contacts, confers on his evidence and his word, in the absence of any proof, an authority which decides the jury's verdict. Why, then—if it is to end like that—so many years of sly cruelties and suffering, so many snobbish lives devoted to the jealous preservation of imaginary principles, so much subtlety and so many tricks used in the pursuit of a shadow whose only existence is that of vain efforts expended as a complete waste in order to grasp it?

In Proust's novel snobbery plays the part of a bait. It inveigles men by means of their ambitions, desires and passions into launching themselves into the void, showing in this way the absence of any sense of proportion on their part and any support in the derisory object to which their impulses are directed. This object is nothing less than the hare of which Pascal speaks in the fragment on *Diversions:* that hare which one exhausts oneself in chasing all day and which one "would not have bothered to buy."

At a Farm in Cornwall

Pillars of bleaching light as white
as hot iron wander the sea,
wither the edges of thickets
and rise from the oven
of the yard. Men, women and beasts
stirring like hieroglyphs
in the far grass have left
sacks as still as altars, unlocked doors
under twilit arches and a faint
smell of milk. Beneath my feet
the grass ferments in a vault-dark
fever of trapped heat
where instinct, sting and mandible
devour, devour; and on the wall
a carcass hangs in a simmer of flies
to feed maggots for bait.

Before there were books and churches, Celts
sank a well here, and manured
generations with their flesh and poems:
life feeds on death and every beast,
flower and leaf,
rots, lives, rots immortally.

Glyn Hughes

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Michael Howard

Realists and Romantics

On Maintaining an International Order

A BIOLOGY MASTER at my school, who was one of the nastiest men and the worst teachers I have ever met and who put me off the natural sciences for life, used to lash out stupendous punishments at random and justify them with the comment that it would teach us all to get used to injustice in a fundamentally unjust world. At the time we were chiefly aware of the convenience to himself of a philosophy which absolved him from the bother of considering whether an offence had really been committed, if so by whom, and what the appropriate way of dealing with it was. In perspective his actions seem rather to be an extreme example of a very commonly held value-system, inculcated by a large school-boy literature and lore about suffering injustice in silence, not sneaking, accepting that the greater good must not be prejudiced by complaints about the lesser evil, and realising the need to develop a certain stoicism to cope with a world governed by a Deity whose irrationality and unpredictability had been so clearly demonstrated to, among others, the unfortunate Job. Who were we to draw out Leviathan with a hook? No, we set our teeth and got on with the business of living in a necessarily imperfect world, trying only to mitigate the worst effects of its imperfections on ourselves and our immediate environment.

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It was an unheroic attitude, though one probably shared by the overwhelming majority of mankind since the beginning of time. It could be rationalised, I suppose, rather like this. Social order is the ultimate condition of the exercise of moral values, and must therefore be preserved. But social order, if it is not despotically enjoined and enforced, rests on a whole series of barely satisfactory compromises between interest groups in which no one interest can ever be fully satisfied. Acceptance of a less than satisfactory situation is a necessary condition of social organisation. No one would deny the right of any group which feels its position intolerable to work for its improvement. It is assumed, hopefully, that this can be done within the existing framework of law and order; that processes of law are universally available and correspond with natural justice.

Even the most stoical of English school-boy literature usually contains a *deus ex machina*, a wise and just headmaster who punishes the bully in the last chapter; while for nearly two millennia Christians believed that acceptance of incomprehensible injustice on earth would bring its reward in heaven. But if there is not such a headmaster, and one no longer believes in such a heaven; if the law, even if not palpably unjust, is heavily biased (as law tends to be) on the side of the *status quo*, or is quite unenforceable or unavailable: what do you do then? The cautious and middle-aged say: Never mind—accept the *status quo* and try to improve it. If you destroy it you will end up with something very much worse. The young and impatient say: Nonsense; such caution merely displays moral laziness and evasion. Smash the system! Don't tolerate the intolerable! Our patience is exhausted. However imperfect the post-revolutionary structure, it cannot be worse than the one we have got.

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MY ONLY EXCUSE for putting forward these banal reflections on the most fundamental of all political problems is that this conflict is one of the major factors in the confused international scene at the moment. The inevitable and usually fruitful inter-generational dialectic is perhaps always at its most intense a generation after a great war. The analogy between 1848 and 1968 is too close to be coincidental. Between 1793 and 1815, as between 1914 and 1945, Western civilisation was convulsed by a conflict part social, part economic, predominantly military, which swept away traditional landmarks, inflicted suffering and destruction on an unprecedented scale[1] and left whole tracts of the social system in ruins. The victorious powers reconstructed a political system which, by ensuring stability, made possible economic recovery within a remarkably short space of time. But it was a system designed to preserve the hegemony of those powers and their capacity to maintain their preferred political order, rather than to eliminate inequities. The Vienna powers regarded the principle of "national self-determination" as being so utterly destructive of the political balance that they left it out of account—except to preserve police-barriers against it—in constructing their new system. In 1918 the Versailles powers found themselves impaled by the dilemma that if they made the principle of national self-determination, which they professed, the basis of their settlement, their defeated adversary, Germany, would remain stronger than any of her European neighbours. Their inability to solve this dilemma, to reconcile justice with power, led straight to the Second World War. In 1945 the Potsdam powers subordinated national self-determination to the maintenance of their own hegemony; the Russians in Eastern Europe, the West in Greece. The Americans, bless them, still found it hard to believe that natural processes would not everywhere throw up régimes which would docilely accept their leadership, and saw the hidden hand of communism when they did not. The British knew that such régimes, in the Mediterranean and the Middle East, needed a helping hand. The Russians knew perfectly well that their own clients needed a mailed fist.

The suspicion, clumsiness, and brutality of the Russians; the inexperience and confusion of the Americans; the weariness, impotence and nostalgia of the British; all were far more important than any ideological differences in making impossible any formal but realistic settlement such as that of Vienna, which could form the explicit basis for a new international system. The contrast between the aspirations of the United Nations Charter and the manner in which international politics were in practice conducted brought both into disrepute. Indeed the environment of the United Nations, by dramatising conflict for the benefit of television audiences, made (and still makes) very much more difficult the delicate process of reconciling differences and reaching complex agreements between the representatives of mutually suspicious and culturally alien communities. Nevertheless a new international system did slowly emerge, and the statesmen of the world found rather to their surprise, like M. Jourdain and his prose (the analogy is Raymond Aron's), that they were operating it.

IT WAS A SYSTEM based on the military supremacy of the United States and the Soviet Union over any conceivable combination of adversaries; on their mutual antagonism; and on the probability that any armed conflict that occurred between them would result in damage to both on an almost inconceivable scale.

Each had to recognise the power of the other, and nuclear weapons played the part between these States which their domestic legal systems play within them; of preventing inevitable conflict from erupting into overt violence. In order to operate the system the United States had to learn to regard the Soviet Union, not as an outlaw to be lectured about the principles of international morality and fenced in by hostile alliances, but as a power with rights and interests of its own which had to be treated as an equal. The Russian Government had to learn that not even possession of their own nuclear weapons and delivery-systems empowered them to treat foreign governments with the doctrinaire arrogance they used to their own peoples. It took about eighteen years, 1945–1963, for the system to develop, while the world held its breath and prayed.

Once the system was in operation, it looked remarkably like the pattern of international relations which European States had developed over three centuries. Career diplomats had to

[1] Germany probably suffered more between 1618 and 1648 than between 1797 and 1815. But the destruction caused by the Napoleonic wars, from Moscow to Madrid, was far more extensive.

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listen with professional courtesy as enthusiastic young academics from Harvard expounded to them, with much jargon and many mathematical equations, principles of international negotiation which they had absorbed with their mother's milk. But there was one not unimportant difference. The world may have simply rediscovered the diplomatic wheel; but it had to operate it in a uniquely dangerous environment. As Coral Bell expresses it in her splendid new book *The Conventions of Crisis:*

> Decision makers in the earlier periods were like drivers conducting powerful and ill-steered trucks along badly made roads in conditions of poor visibility, and under the urge of a certain competitiveness on the part of the owners. They still are, only some of the trucks are known to be loaded with nitro-glycerine.[2]

The penalties for failure were always great. Even in 1914 professional diplomats broke down and wept when war was declared. Now they were absolute. War, or at least total war, meant mutual annihilation. Yet if the use of force could *never* be threatened, how could members of the international system secure the adjustment of conditions which were inevitably arbitrary and which were bound to appear, as the years passed by, increasingly intolerable and unjust? Must the world remain for ever, paralysed by nuclear terror, frozen in the pattern of 1945?

Clearly not. There had to be change. But change, if it is not to be arbitrary, implies negotiation. And negotiations, if they are not to be sterile, require some *ultima ratio*. And if War was no longer between super-powers what it had been since the Renaissance, *ultima ratio regum*, a substitute had to be found. According to Coral Bell a substitute *was* found: the Crisis. The Crisis itself was now the test of will and skill which War had been in the past. It was for demonstrations and limited actions in crises that armed forces, whether nuclear or conventional, were now deployed. The opponent's will had to be changed without large-scale hostilities, and if possible without hostilities of any kind at all. "There is no strategy any longer," declared Robert MacNamara after the Cuban crisis of 1962, "there is only crisis management. . . ."

THAT IS THE VALUE of the small and distinguished body of literature on Crisis Management by such authorities as Alastair Buchan, Thomas Schelling and Oran Young, to which Coral Bell's short but wise book has now to be added. Perhaps these are the true successors to Clausewitz and Liddell Hart. Coral Bell sees crisis management as "a special skill within the field of diplomacy, as the control of a skid is a special skill within the general field of motoring. . . ." There are, she points out, very few relationships between states which do not contain elements of conflict. Crisis occurs when "the conflicts in a relationship rise to a level which threatens to transform the nature of the relationship"—in marital relations from marriage to divorce; between friendly states from alliance to breach; between hostile states, from peace to war. The Crisis she considers to be "a necessary evil in the assessment of claims for change." Indeed,

> properly managed, it may ultimately enable states to write the peace treaties without first fighting the wars.

Obviously crises come in all shapes and sizes, purely domestic, quasi-domestic (Ulster, Biafra), "intra-mural" within alliances, "adversary crises" between declared opponents. But there is a further distinction, which Coral Bell does not make as clear as she might, between crises in which violence, or the threat of it, is an appropriate instrument and those where it is not. Violence did resolve the crises over the Straits of Tiran in 1967 and Bangladesh in 1971. It is being used in Ulster to destroy the credibility of the Stormont government, and it would be premature to claim that it has failed. One form of controlled violence which has historically been very effective indeed as a political instrument is analysed by James Cable in a monograph recently issued by the International Institute for Strategic Studies: *Gunboat Diplomacy*.[3] Naval forces, Mr Cable points out, are capable of a flexibility and (within their range) a precision unique among weapons systems.

> A ship that has approached the victim's coast, even a fleet that has entered territorial waters, is a lesser involvement than a platoon that has crossed a frontier or an aircraft that has dropped a bomb.

Ships by their very movement, without firing a shot, can indicate national involvement and resolve, conveying those "signals" to the adversary of which crisis management so largely consists. Other forces can be used to convey the

[2] *The Conventions of Crisis: a Study in Diplomatic Management*. By CORAL BELL. Oxford University Press for The Royal Institute of International Affairs, £1.00.

[3] *Gunboat Diplomacy: Political Applications of Limited Naval Force*. By JAMES CABLE. Chatto & Windus for the Institute for Strategic Studies, £2·80.

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same kind of message: one recalls the American airlifts of troops to West Germany at the time of the 1961 Berlin crisis, and the harassing low-level air sweeps over the Cuban missile sites a year later. But nothing is quite comparable to warships, cruising meditatively off a politically disturbed coast. Here, again, the super-powers have rediscovered the wheel—the Russians a little late in the day. A Soviet squadron exercising in the Eastern Mediterranean at the time of the Suez adventure in 1956, or at the time of the American landings in the Lebanon in 1958, would have been a very effective instrument for crisis management. There is one there now; and Mr Cable is able to quote a Russian Admiral ("with an unctuous rectitude worthy of any of his Western colleagues") saying in May 1969: "The presence of the Soviet Navy in the Mediterranean is a most important factor for stabilisation in that troubled area of the globe." Pax Sovietica?

Pax, in fact, Americano-Sovietca. The crises Coral Bell analyses almost all took place within the troubled years 1958–1962, when the super-powers were flexing their nuclear muscles at one another over Berlin and Cuba like male gorillas horrifically beating their breasts and, also like male gorillas, very unwilling indeed to fight. After these necessary demonstrations of virility and resolve the two kings of the jungle settled down side by side in a kind of grumbling tranquillity.

BUT ALL MAY NOT be well yet. The Berlin-Cuba crisis period marked the Soviet coming of age as a nuclear super-power. We have yet to see her coming of age as the naval world-power which she is evidently determined to be. Having successfully broken the American monopoly of nuclear deterrence, she is now set to break her monopoly of maritime ubiquity. Her naval forces, as we have already seen, are a major factor in the Mediterranean, and the small size of her presence in the Indian Ocean is out of all proportion to its political significance. Will her ships appear in increasing numbers in East African, South East Asian, or even Latin American waters? "Some of the most interesting pages in the future history of limited naval force," Mr Cable remarks drily, "might turn out to be written in Russian."

This Russian maritime expansion (for the growth of the Soviet Navy is accompanied by an even more remarkable increase in the size of her merchant fleet) takes place at a time when the United States is displaying a new caution about its overseas commitments. How far this caution will dictate a policy of withdrawal, how far it will permit a policy of more watchfulness while Soviet influence expands in areas—the Indian Ocean especially—where the American presence has yet to make itself felt,[4] nobody can tell, least of all the United States Government. Soviet power may probe, American power may or may not react. If it does react, Soviet power may or may not withdraw. Mr Cable is optimistic in his prognosis. He believes that as the American disengagement from its commitments continues,

> the diplomatic and political functions of the United States Navy may actually expand: those grey, restless innumerable ships will console Americans and reassure their friends; they will constitute the universal, the flexible, the removable reminder of American power and concern.

If this is so there will certainly be more crises as the two navies assess the limits of each other's capacity and will to protect their national interests; and statesmen had better sleep with Coral Bell's *vade mecum* under their pillows. But if the nuclear crises of 1958–62 could be successfully overcome and result in a more stable peace, there is no reason to suppose that the naval crises of the 1970s cannot be as well; and that the peace treaties may again be written (in Coral Bell's telling phrase) without first fighting the wars.

ON THE WHOLE it might be considered, on the evidence of the past quarter-of-a-century, that the statesmen of the world have not done at all badly. The United States and the Soviet Union have learned to cooperate in spite of their ideological hostility. Nuclear weapons have become a factor making for stability rather than the reverse, and a kind world has forgotten Lord Snow's unfortunate prophecy that within ten years one of them was bound to go off. A solution has been found to the German problem which even the Germans have grown to accept. Peace has brought confidence, and confidence has brought economic growth and unprecedented prosperity on both sides of the Iron Curtain. A generation which remembers the sickening uncertainties of the 1930s, the strain and physical fear of the Second World War, the feeling of

[4] It is beginning to. The United States agreement with Bahrein within a few days of Britain's final withdrawal was one of the more interesting events of the New Year.

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utter helplessness as one surveyed the ruins of Europe in 1945 and the dreadful imminence of nuclear holocaust for fifteen years after that, may well look around in wonder at the peaceful and prosperous order they have created, and feel that they have earned a serene old age.

Not so their children. They turn on their elders as the equally angry, equally shaggy, equally revolutionary young of the 1840s turned on their parents. For them this state of equilibrium which we have striven for so many decades to create is intolerable. "The system" which Coral Bell and so many others have devised such ingenious techniques for preserving ought not to be preserved at all. The understanding towards which the Soviet Union and the United States have been clumsily feeling their way is a monstrous conspiracy between equally vile establishments. The affluence to which they are the heirs rests on a system of exploitation and inequality, and is producing a hideous civilisation which is poisoning the world. They want none of it. The power structure which preserves the international system is based on military and economic oppression, to say nothing of that ultimate in human wickedness, The Bomb. The "peace" and "order" they see around them is in fact a structure of "frozen violence", which must be smashed by counter-violence. The world we have created, is, in their eyes, obscene.

ONE'S REACTION TO THIS will vary according to temperament. It is hard for anyone in their fifties to recognise without alarm that ugly mixture of fanaticism and innocence, idealism and blind destructiveness which the young of the New Left display in almost identical measure as did their predecessors in the European fascist movements forty years ago. We thought, fools that we were, that we had destroyed that particular devil for good. But no: as Auden observed in the 1930s, he has broken parole and arisen; he has dynamited his way out of prison. The Jacobins, the Fifth Monarchy Men, the Anabaptists are at it again: overturn, overturn, overturn. One of the nastier sights in Oxford recently was the large black slogan scrawled across the wall of the Bodleian: *Burn It All Down*! They meant it. What they would have put in its place is uncertain. The Anabaptist-Jacobin personality is concerned only with destruction of what it sees as an unjust system. It is for others to build a just one in the ruins it has made.

There is something very odd about any adult who does not contemplate this aspect of the youth culture today without deep disquiet. But there are other aspects he may respect rather more highly. The peace we enjoy is certainly based, as Coral Bell points out, on "the necessary acceptance of injustice." The particular injustice to which she refers is the Soviet domination of Eastern Europe, an aspect of the contemporary situation in which the radical Left remains curiously uninterested. They are, however, passionately concerned about American support, in the interests of the power balance, of régimes which are considerably less than perfect. No one would deny that Greece, for example, is a police state of a peculiarly nasty kind; but the overriding requirements of international stability dictate that its Government should be recognised and that it should remain a member of the Western Alliance, rather than that it should lapse into a state of infectious anarchy. The exponent of *Realpolitik* believes that incidental injustice must be tolerated in the overriding interests of international order. The radical maintains that the international order is intolerable precisely because it rests on such injustices, which mount up all over the world, and of which the American intervention in Viet Nam provided the outstanding example. Whatever the arguments may be about regional or global stability, about dominoes or deterrence, what the United States has been doing in Viet Nam is *wrong* and ought to be stopped.

But do these discontented romantics offer a real threat to the stability of the international system? 1848, that "Revolution of the Intellectuals," did no more than shake the structure of Congress Europe and in 1850 it seemed to stand firmer than ever. It was not until a great revisionist power appeared—the France of Louis Napoleon—that the aspirations of the romantics were achieved, the dominance of the Vienna system was destroyed, and Germany and Italy could be created according to the principles of national self-determination. Will China do the same for the *guerrilleros* of Latin America, the Frelimo movement in Southern Africa, the Palestinians and other assorted freedom fighters in the Middle East? This, obviously, is what revolutionaries throughout the world hope; it is what Washington and Moscow fear; and it is a hope which the Chinese themselves have kept alive over the years with nicely-judged help in all the appropriate quarters. It is no doubt precisely this situation that President Nixon (advised by

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that specialist on 19th-century diplomacy Henry Kissinger) is trying to avoid by his efforts to draw China into "the System." Certainly, China's performance so far shows that she can be very selective about the national liberation movements she chooses to support. The Chinese went through their part in the Bangladesh affair as if they had been fully paid-up members of the System for years.

But even if the Chinese do not join the System, their power to challenge it is very limited. Their nuclear strength is of the magnitude of the French. They have no navy. Their army is hardly mechanised. Their internal problems are vast. China is neither a global power nor a superpower. If she were to sponsor serious attempts to break up the existing balance, the effect would probably be to drive the Russians and the Americans even closer together than they are today. What course to pursue, whether to join the System or not, is no doubt a matter of fairly earnest debate within the Peoples Republic itself. But sooner or later, if historical precedent is anything to go by, revolutionary China will do so, as revolutionary France and revolutionary Russia did before. Once more the revolution will find itself betrayed. *C'est son métier.*

BUT THE REVOLUTIONARIES have not wasted their time or, for that matter, ours. The revolts of 1848 may have been to all appearances failures, and been succeeded by yet more rigorous repression. But Europe was never the same again. The preservation of the *status quo* as an objective in itself ceases to be practicable when it can be justified only in terms of protection against perils which a growing proportion of the population has never experienced and in which only a continuous conditioning process can preserve their belief. In Communist and some Roman Catholic societies such conditioning is still possible: it is out of the question in the rationalistic and Protestant West. As a result the evils which would result from, say, a Communist domination of Viet Nam remain purely notional and arguable. The evils which are perpetuated in preventing it appear so actual and so evident that the "order" in whose name they are carried out stands *ipsis factis* condemned. Not, perhaps, in the eyes of those for whom the preservation of the existing order is in itself the highest value. But those who seek to justify that order by reference to a higher value-system will very properly feel uneasy. Driven by the logic of the situation to acts incompatible with their own values, they are forced to re-examine their original premises; and they may find that these, after thirty years, are no longer in very good working order.

The young thus have every reason to cry out to their elders, *Do you realise what you are doing?* But their elders may still have to reply, *Yes, unfortunately we do.* The system of international stability which we have constructed since the war *does* involve "the acceptance of necessary injustice," even if not on the scale in which we have acquiesced. To redress injustice one still requires a framework of power and order, and the penalties of total international anarchy nowadays are ones that we must never allow ourselves for a single moment to forget. Coral Bell's final observations are wise and relevant:

> Evolving the conventions which sustain order (or at least reduce the most damaging forms of disorder) opens one way towards the possibility of justice.

Cold comfort for those who, like Kingsley Amis's heroine, Want It Now.

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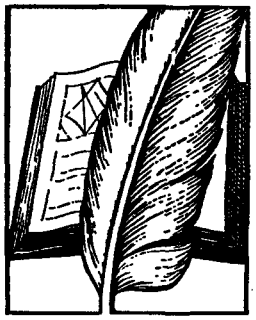

Column

IT IS an agreeable platitude of our time that, since we know very little about the way in which the arts affect people, they do not really affect them at all. The platitude is agreeable because it relieves us of any responsibility for controlling or censoring the arts, which to people like myself goes much against the grain. It is a platitude because, in recent years, it has been repeated so often that we are in danger of accepting it as if it were some self-evident truth.

If, nevertheless, we regard this *idée reçue* with a certain degree of scepticism and wonder why it should be so readily and generally acceptable, we begin at once to become involved in the question of what constitutes evidence to the modern mind. There was a time when the best evidence was provided by Revelation, and another when it depended on Faith, which is something rather different; there was a time when it rested on Deductive Reason and another, which still persists, in which Induction alone was a sure guide to the truth. But the particular characteristic of our own age is that no evidence is regarded as acceptable unless it is statistical, that is to say, that it is of a kind which can be expressed in numbers. Today, it is not enough to say that what the soldier said is not evidence; if it could be given a statistical form, the court would be likely to accept it. Nothing counts, we might say, unless it can be counted.

I offer these remarks as an introduction to an interview in the *Evening News*, by Mr John Trevelyan, the former official censor of the British film industry, with regard to Stanley Kubrick's film, *A Clockwork Orange*. What concerned Mr Trevelyan was that the film was devoted, both in general and in detail, to the subject of violence, and that his successor should have been attacked for affixing his *nihil obstat* to it. Mr Trevelyan felt that some defence was needed, and gallantly offered to answer the charge on his behalf. The defence in fact is the familiar one.

> It is easy to say [says Mr Trevelyan] that crimes of violence are caused by films and television, but, although much research has been done, so far no evidence has been found to justify this claim, except in rare individual cases.

I do not know how many individual cases he would require before he would regard them as establishing a *prima facie* case; Dostoevsky, for instance, would have regarded one single case of sadism against a child, if inspired by film or television, as quite sufficient to justify the total suppression of both industries.

It would not, however, be enough for Mr Trevelyan, or perhaps for most of us. Yet, while rejecting the claim that the representation of violence on screen or television may be a cause of crime, he at the same time appears to believe that it may, particularly if it is sufficiently shocking, have a therapeutic and beneficent effect upon the audience.

> I believe that it is not only the right but the duty of an artist to shock if he feels this is needed to make us think seriously about humanity and its destiny. . . . Stanley Kubrick in his masterly film makes us do this. . . .

Now Mr Trevelyan has, of course, every right to believe this, and perhaps *A Clockwork Orange* does make him personally "think seriously about humanity and its destiny", and this may be a very good thing to do; yet it is only fair to point out that Mr Trevelyan has no more or better evidence for this particular belief than those who believe that Stanley Kubrick's masterly film titillates the sadistic appetites of its audience. Why should he be so scrupulous about the need for evidence in the one case and be so indifferent to it in the other? Are we to take it for granted that though films may have a moral effect upon their audience, they cannot possibly have an immoral one?

When I went to see *A Clockwork Orange*, it was noticeable that its most violent episodes, of murder, or rape, or assault and battery, were greeted by the audience with something which was suspiciously like a giggle. Was this a response of shocked nerves, or perhaps of a kind of embarrassment at being subjected to so brutal an assault? Or did it reflect a rather sensible feeling that there was an element of the absurd and grotesque in those violent images? Or was it in fact a sign of sadistic instincts being stimulated?

I DO NOT KNOW THE ANSWER to these questions, though one observed a very similar audience reaction to the more macabre incidents in Roman Polanski's version of *Macbeth*; but I very much doubt whether it was the response of people who were being forced into "thinking seriously about humanity and its destiny", and I cannot help thinking that if Mr Trevelyan, brooding on such mysteries, had been there, he would have found himself in a minority of one. As for myself I can only confess that as, in *A Clockwork Orange*, one scene of violence followed another with a certain sickening predictability, I merely had the sensation of being brutally and savagely assaulted

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myself, and I do not find this conducive to thinking seriously, whether about humanity or anything else.

Perhaps this is my fault; as Goethe said, *Blut ist ein ganz besonderer Saft* (Blood is a very special juice), and not everyone can drink it with pleasure or edification. Yet it is not only Mr Trevelyan who assures us that *A Clockwork Orange* has a serious and valuable message; we also have it on the authority of Anthony Burgess, who wrote the novel with the same title on which the film is based and which it faithfully follows. Moreover, according to Mr Burgess, the message is not only serious; it is in a sense a religious one, "about the danger of reclaiming sinners through sapping their capacity to choose between good and evil," and in his opinion, Kubrick's film is of the same order as *Hamlet* or *King Lear*, which we do not fear to show upon the stage even though they might encourage "youthful watchers [to] kill their own uncles or tear out the eyeballs of the innocent."

These are great names indeed to call on, though I cannot say that I find the analogy very convincing. Mr. Burgess might perhaps have been on stronger ground if he had compared *A Clockwork Orange* with *Paradise Lost*, a contribution to the great debate on *Fixed fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute* with his youthful hooligan hero as a kind of modern Lucifer hurled from heaven because of his fidelity to the principle of *Evil be thou my good.* But somehow I do not see either Mr Burgess or Mr Kubrick as Miltons, neither mute nor inglorious, more especially because Mr Burgess also believes that art has no direct or indirect effect on people's behaviour: it "initiates nothing except itself. . . ." And like Mr Trevelyan he repeats once again the familiar thesis that we have no evidence to show that nature ever does imitate art:

> Let me say at once that no evidence has ever been adduced in a court of law to prove beyond doubt that a work of art can stimulate anti-social behaviour—or for that matter can promote altruism and the other Christian virtues.

But if that is the case, what is the point of *A Clockwork Orange*'s message? or is it simply a message whose beauty we should admire for its own sake, as of some sermon which we should admire for its eloquence and piety, its wealth of imagery and elegance of style, but should not dream of taking seriously and applying to our own lives, even to the extent of "thinking seriously about humanity and its destiny"?

IN ALL THIS, I think that Mr Burgess, Mr Trevelyan and all the rest of us are in some danger of losing our heads and forgetting that the first law of cinema and television is that they should amuse and entertain us to the commercial profit of their promoters. *A Clockwork Orange* is no exception to this law, only it chooses to amuse and entertain us, if we so please, with particularly vivid images of violence; the violence is the message. Mr Trevelyan piously asserts that he "condemns violence which is put into films for the enjoyment of the viewer and for commercial profit." But why should he, believing as he does that the presentation of violence has no untoward effects upon the audience? From his own point of view, this would seem to be an intolerable bit of Puritanism. Why shouldn't the innocent filmgoer quaff his draught of technicolour blood, so long as it does not corrupt and inflame his own? And what does it matter what motive lies behind such productions, whether of profit or of art, so long as we have no reason to fear the results?

The truth is, I think, that when questions of sex and violence, on stage or screen or television, come into question, common sense is apt to fly out of the window. In our ordinary experience we do not require absolute proof, such as would satisfy a court of law or a committee of statisticians, before taking reasonable precautions against consequences which instinct or experience warns us may prove dangerous. We do not normally engage in great enterprises when we have absolutely no information about how they are likely to turn out; insurance companies, invited to quote a rate for hazards about which no reliable statistics are available, do not quote a very low rate but rather a very high one.

WHAT EXACTLY THE HAZARD IS in exposing thousands of millions of people, day by day and hour by hour, to films and television in which the incidence of violence is far higher than anything they are likely to encounter in real life is certainly a subject of which we have no precise knowledge. But from this it would equally certainly be irrational to conclude that no hazard whatever is involved. I myself find it extremely difficult to believe that the fruits of violence showered upon us by cinema and television from their inexhaustible cornucopia have no effect whatever upon their audience; unless, of course, we can assume that by now the audience is so dulled and dazed that it is no longer capable of making any vital response whatever.

If our ignorance on the subject is really so great it is surely time that we began to find out something about it. In the United States, where the incidence of television violence has been shown to be double what it is on our own screens, they have at least begun to do precisely this, with results which seem to show that, in respect of the

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young at least, this proliferation of savagery is not entirely without effect.

THE EVIDENCE IS TO BE FOUND in the results of the enquiry into violence on television and its possible relationship to anti-social behaviour among young people, which was sponsored, in 1969, at a cost of $1 million, by John Pastore, the Democratic Senator for Rhode Island. The enquiry, and its report which, together with five volumes of supporting evidence, has now been submitted to the U.S. Surgeon General, has had a curious history. Appointments to the advisory committee responsible for the enquiry and its final report were subjected to a veto by the three commercial television networks, and of its twelve members five were either currently employed by them or had been closely associated with them in the past. Its report, when finally submitted, "whether by intent or ineptitude," says *Newsweek*, "misrepresented some of the data, ignored some of it, and buried all of it alive in prose that was obviously meant to be unreadable and unread." The five volumes of evidence have still not been made public.

Despite all these precautions, however, despite distortions and suppression of evidence, the report (according to *Newsweek*) gives no aid or comfort to those, in particular the television companies, who deny that there is any connection between the representation of violence on television and the behaviour of those who watch it and, presumably, enjoy it.[1] It dismisses as unsubstantiated the theory that televised violence may have a therapeutic effect by offering a release to suppressed emotions and instincts. On the other hand, it equally dismisses the theory that it has no effect at all. "The most reasonable conclusion," says one of the researchers engaged in the enquiry, "is that there is a link between televised violence and aggressive behaviour for the majority of normal children. The data show no evidence that only a minority is influenced. This is a factual error." Another says: "Prior to this report, you could not have said that there is a causal relationship between TV violence and aggressive behaviour in children. Now we can see that there is a significant causal relationship."

WOULD THIS BE TRUE about adults? One does not know and certainly one has the feeling that the respectable middle-class audiences which queue up to watch *A Clockwork Orange*, Sam Peckinpah's *Straw Dogs*, or Roman Polanski's *Macbeth* will not, when the film is over, repeat in the privacy of their homes, or elsewhere, the scenes of murder, rape, and blood-letting which they have found so enjoyable. When the lights go up, their bland faces reveal no more emotion than if they had been watching *Little Women* or *Black Beauty*. The lovers uncoil from each other, the men search for their hats and the ladies for their handbags as if all the horrors on which they have supped sat as lightly on their stomachs as a soufflé. They look as if they might all repeat the comment, reported in *Newsweek*, of the boy who, when the feast of blood and mangled flesh provided by the film *Dirty Harry* was over, breathed a deep sigh of satisfaction and said quietly: "That was nice."

THE DANGER, one feels, is that mass consumption of simulated violence will not so much lead to its being acted out in real life as to so desensitise and dehumanise people's reactions that, when they see the real thing, they will not recognise it for the horror which it really is but merely accept it as passively and apathetically as the simulated version. Perhaps one can say of screen and television violence what Burns ruefully said of sexual promiscuity:

> *I waive the quantum of the sin,*
> *The hazard of concealing;*
> *But och! it hardens a' within*
> *And petrifies the feeling!*

In the end, one has the sense that those who are responsible for such films as *Straw Dogs* or *A Clockwork Orange* are indulging in the irresponsible exploitation of one of the most precious of human faculties: the faculty, that is to say, of moral sensibility, of recognising what is appropriate to us as human beings. Mr Trevelyan believes that the portrayal of violence is legitimate because it shocks us into awareness. It may in fact do something quite different. It may merely stun us into insensibility.

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[1]The same would seem to hold for the cinema. In a recent *New York Times* article enquiring "Has Film Violence Gone Too Far?" (and the answer was a surprising yes for such an organ of fashionable permissiveness), the *Times*' film critic, Mr Vincent Canby, reported (16 Jan.): " . . . In his excellent small but comprehensive book, *Violent America: The Movies 1948–1964* (published by the Museum of Modern Art), Lawrence Alloway refers to the experiments conducted by Leonard Berkowitz who found that people subjected to violent stimuli on the screen were not—as the catharsis theorists would have you believe—drained of aggressive inclinations, but were more likely to exhibit symptoms of hostile behaviour."

Canby catalogues the horrors and brutalities of what he calls the "new zap-plop-stab-splatter era of movie violence of unprecedented explicitness" (in which everything "had to become more vivid to impress us, to excite us and—whether we believe it nor not—to give us pleasure"); and he concludes, "Now that the explicitness has gone almost as far as it can go. it may be that the margins of pleasure have been exceeded. I would hope so, for my own future and that of everyone I know. . . . "

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Yuli Daniel

from: And At That Time

What is a "kontslager"? This strange hybrid of words
burns like a slap on the century's visage.
"Lager"—we know that: ". . . we set up camp near Yassa,
the cock crowed from morning, and we chopped branches for firewood. . . ."
"Lager"—that's familiar: ". . . we made our camp in the forest,
dried out the dew, boiled brook water in the pot. . . ."
What then does the prefix mean, this unnatural addition—"konts",
which makes the word crash down the slope in a final hiccup of death,
and then, turning, rattling its greedy guts,
it rises, like a vampire, a werewolf, a bloodsucker?
Maybe the girl who typed the Secret Decree,—
mistook "a" for "o" and one should read it "kants"?
The longed-for sum-total of centuries of bureaucratic ways.
A veritable heaven, a paradise, where the paragraph is omnipotent, like God.
Where the "out-basket" is smaller than the "in-basket",
Where, when a directive goes round—don't move, don't stand, don't sit.
Perhaps some young typesetter, not too bright, spoiled it in a hurry,
let it slip? And one should read it—"konets"?
To creation—"konets." To satisfaction—"konets." And to everything
that disturbed the darkness, that beckoned to the soul and to the mind.
To man—"konets." To humanity—also "curtains."
A bowl of thin soup you'll get. Nothing more.
True or not, I don't know. But this mongrel syllable
lives in every house, it has made itself common.
Well, what about it, philologist? Come on, answer, speak up,
with whom did you beget this word, how did you help it crawl into the dictionary?
And when, at last, will you attack this stagnation, turned norm,
and kill this syllable, marking it red?

translated by Vera S. Dunham and Deming Brown

NOTE

THIS POEM is based on puns which are difficult to translate The poet is exploiting the Soviet practice of contracting long phrases, usually of a bureaucratic nature, into single words.

Thus, the term for "concentration camp" *(kontsentratsionnyi lager)* is "kontslager." The word "lager" by itself means "camp", not necessarily with a prison connotation.

The root prefix *"kants"* refers to "chancery" and the whole range of bureaucratic activity.

The word *"konets"* means "the end."

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THEATRE

A Metaphysical Comedy

By John Weightman

SINCE academic scrupulousness is out of fashion and guesswork all the rage, let me explain out of the top of my head how Mr Tom Stoppard came to write his new play, *Jumpers*, now at the Old Vic. I shall, as it happens, be doing him a service; in a baffling interview included in the programme, he himself, as befits a Neo-Surrealist, confesses complete ignorance about the way his genius works.

Not so many years ago, there was a remarkable "happening" on television. Miss Eartha Kitt and Professor (later Sir Freddie) Ayer found themselves side by side in the same programme, discussing, if I remember rightly, the subject of romantic love. That is, they were side by side to begin with, but Miss Kitt gradually edged in, absent-mindedly laid a tender palm on the Professor's knee and looked up into his face with calculated awe every time he uttered a long word. A. J. Ayer is not easily nonplussed, but Eartha, the well-named, won hands down on that occasion. Mr Stoppard saw this and said to himself: "Here we have a perfect polarity: the male word-spinner, weaving patterns of rationality, and the dumb, ironical female, whose chief weapon is her instinct. Some day I can write a play about a philosopher and an actress: brain and gut."

A little later, like all of us, he watched the moon-landings and moved in stages from exultation to deflation. What a triumph of the human spirit! But is the moon no more than this vacant lot, this stupid stone set in the nameless void? Space travel, instead of being a liberation, is a dead-end, confirming our isolation in the universe. The moon has been de-poeticised. We were better off with our illusions, when we could still make it rhyme with June and spoon. And he reflected that if the actress in his play were a musical-comedy star, she could have a nervous breakdown, because of the depreciation of her stock-in-trade.

At the same time, what does the moon landscape, with its bumps and hollows scanned by the moving camera, remind you of? The grain of naked, female flesh, viewed from an oblique and intimate angle? Right, so if we have a television screen at the back of the stage, we can, as it were —by alternately displaying the moon and our nude heroine—resuscitate Diana in a secondary form although she has been demolished in her primary form: an interesting poetic double-take. (Curiously enough, although the actress playing the part happens providentially to be called Diana, Mr Stoppard gives the character the apparently non-significant name of Dorothy.)

Then, if the play is to sound truly modern, it must not be solemn. Heaven forbid, for instance, that it should trundle sententiously along in the manner of the later Edward Albee, so beloved of the rival theatre. The tone of the universe is not solemn but tragi-comic. Or rather, the universe has no tone, not the music of the spheres but the eternal silence of infinite space. It is our chatter which creates the noise, and we cannot possibly take ourselves seriously for very long at a time. Therefore, what one should aim at is something like the black humour of Joe Orton's *Loot*. For instance, its randomness allows one to do almost anything; you only have to kill a character pointlessly in Act I to have a corpse to play about with for the rest of the evening and to run a gratuitous thread of suspense through the whole action. You can also introduce a comic policeman with a right to interrogate, and this helps on the dialogue.

THE PROFESSOR MUST, of course, belong to a university; and we might suppose from the newspapers that the universities, particularly the Arts departments, have lost confidence in themselves and are all rather dubious. Since there are no ultimate academic values, we can expect a Vice-Chancellor to be a suave fixer wearing

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several hats and administering a nebulous entity. The Greek conjunction of gymnastics and philosophy can be imagined as having degenerated into an acrobatics club, "The Jumpers", which includes most of the philosophic staff, whose bounce is better than their brains. And, all Higher Inferences having disappeared from life, society as a whole can be supposed as having gone over to a form of soulless, Rad-Lib efficiency with the result that the Archbishop of Canterbury is a former politician who does not believe in God and has been shunted into the job as a matter of administrative convenience.

MR STOPPARD has stirred all these ingredients into a delightfully Absurdist play, more successful in some respects than *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern*, although still a bit too scrappy and incoherent for my taste. I laughed almost continually and came out of the theatre feeling cheered up; but quite a bit of the action did not seem necessary and I have failed to understand a number of points, even after reading the text. Why, for instance, has Dorothy gone off sex with her husband, after the shock of the de-poeticisation of the moon? She is still fond of him, and she is not totally traumatised since she is having some sort of affair with the Vice-Chancellor. I suspect that it is simply because Mr Stoppard wants to make a pun about a consummate artist refusing consummation. And why is the play weighted down at the end with the rather tedious coda? It could have stopped five minutes before it does. Is it because Mr Stoppard cannot quite control his flow of language and gimmicks? To judge by the extremely silly programme interview, it is almost as if he were afraid to think commonsensically, in case his demon should be castrated. In my opinion, this is an error which has weakened the work of some other Absurdists, such as Ionesco. But then my contention is that the conquests of the irrational should always be explicable eventually in terms of the rational, and that one should feel them to be rational even before one can discover why they are so. According to my antennae, quite a few bits of this play have not been brought fully into intellectual or aesthetic focus.

THE BASIC PATTERN of the work is quite comprehensible. In a posh flat, paid for by musical-comedy money, Dorothy Moore is having a mild nervous breakdown in her bedroom, where there is an enormous television screen and a corpse left over from a party. In his study, her husband, George Moore II, is trying to dictate a philosophical lecture to his secretary. Dorothy is Diana Rigg, a splendidly animal body and a wonderful stage presence, while George is Michael Hordern, absolutely perfect as the middle-aged, spare, writhing verbalist, constantly spinning threads of words and then pulling neurotically at them until they snap and leave him disconsolate. It is an interesting sociological fact that the English linguistic philosopher has a marked physical type (much more obvious, for instance, than that of the French philosopher), as if his perpetual wrestling with words had communicated to him a sort of intellectual St. Vitus's dance. Michael Hordern's performance has the beauty of a philosophical ballet, as he ranges round the room, hugs himself in an agony of precision and turns linguistic utterance into the voice of the inner oracle that the philosopher listens to with anxiety, alarm and despair. Of the various recent attempts to put the don on the stage, this is the best, and even transcends Alan Bates' brilliant performance as the Eng. Lit. don in *Butley*.

As the revolving stage swings between the bedroom and the study, the contrast between husband and wife is brought out. Her metaphysical collapse is reverberating in an instinctual body; she mopes, plays games, flirts with the Vice-Chancellor, is photographed in the nude, eats lunch, vamps the police inspector, and so on. He is trying to conduct a train of thought and it is constantly interrupted both by the inherent difficulty of the problem and the commotion emanating from his wife and the external world: her cries for help, the visits of the Vice-Chancellor and the policeman and the political processions outside. As Valéry lamented, one sometimes feels that the whole universe is in league to prevent an idea achieving its ultimate expression. The comedy of the intellectual at work has not often been done, and this is one of the more successful attempts.

The philosopher's monologues are artfully poised between sense and nonsense. The ostensible title of the discourse he is preparing is *"Man: Good, Bad, or Indifferent?"* The real subject is the existence of God and the question of absolutes. George Moore II is not, as it turns out, a follower of A. J. Ayer. Although he talks and behaves like a linguistic philosopher, he is an eccentric who is trying to set back moral philosophy forty years, "which is roughly when it went wrong." He is almost a Cartesian, because each time he develops a verbal argument he finds himself galloping back to a First Cause which, for the want of a better word, he has to call God.

Tom Stoppard in the writing of the part and Michael Hordern even more so in playing it give an admirable impression of a character in the grip of linguistic series. His function in life is to put proposition after proposition, but is a

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string of propositions a reality or a fiction? The political procession in the street is another form of series, which is in progress while he is aligning his verbal counters. How strange, when one comes to think of it, that people should imagine—and today, perhaps, more than ever before—that by marching in sequence from *A* to *B* they are proving something, as if a physical movement were a form of argument, a concretisation of an intellectual series. But all movement, whether physical through space and time, or mental through language and time, is a great mystery. Since Mr Stoppard is presenting us with a caricature of an English philosopher, who is bound to be an empiricist, he has the bright idea of turning Zeno's famous paradoxes about the race between the hare and the tortoise and the flight of the arrow into an attempted *leçon de choses*. George Moore II keeps a hare and a tortoise for demonstration purposes and has a bow and arrow. But, with the practical clumsiness of the philosopher, he accidentally transfixes the hare with the arrow and crushes the tortoise underfoot.

A more curious touch is that the intellectual husband and non-intellectual wife are sometimes allowed to change roles, so that he denounces rationality and she upholds it. When she quotes the Vice-Chancellor as saying that the Church is a monument to irrationality, he replies:

> The National Gallery is a monument to irrationality! Every concert hall is a monument to irrationality!... If rationality were the criterion for things being allowed to exist, the world would be one gigantic field of soya beans.... The irrational, the emotional, the whimsical... these are the stamp of humanity which makes reason a civilising force.

This is obviously a *mot d'auteur*, as is Dorothy's retort when George, with facile humaneness, reproaches her with letting the pet goldfish die:

> Don't you dare splash me with your sentimental rhetoric! It's a bloody goldfish! Do you think every *sole meunière* comes to you untouched by suffering?

There is, then a kind of seriousness lurking behind the Absurd surface. Somewhere inside Mr Stoppard is a Deist, who regrets the hygienic relativism of common sense and has a nostalgia for the metaphysical absolutes that the modern world has abandoned—or, at least, this is what he implies—in favour of prosaic rationalisation. At the same time, he has the makings of a tragic Deist: there is a corpse in the bedroom, the arrow has accidentally pierced the hare, all eating is cruel, and there is no gainsaying that the moon has been deflowered. Lastly, he is a sentimentalist, who still cannot resist the touch of kitsch that was present in *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern*, although here he quickly disinfects it with a disclaimer:

> And yet I tell you that, now and again, not necessarily in the contemplation of rainbows or new-born babes, nor in extremities of pain and joy, but more probably ambushed in some quite trivial moment—say the exchange of signals between two long-distance lorry-drivers in the black sleet of a god-awful night on the old A1—then, in that dip-flash, dip-flash of headlights in the rain that seems to affirm some common ground that is not animal and not long-distance lorry-driving, then I tell you I *know*—I sound like a joke vicar, new paragraph.

Let us hope that so entertaining a writer will manage to keep the vicar in check.

Iceland at the Bottom of a Glass

Swirling angostura over ice
I watch the furred suns fill
The whole window with light
—snow on the Downs packed tight—
The ice in my glass slice
Into shapes, fiord into fiord spill.

It is the same cleft
And glacial view, as looking back
On the rim of the Arctic
I once saw Vatnojökull melt as we left,
Peaks streaked this aromatic
Bittersweet pink, the sea irretrievably black.

Alan Ross

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Race & Neo-Victorianism

By Hugh Tinker

I WONDER WHETHER many people still not quite middle-aged feel, as I do, that my life has been shaped most of all by the Victorian experience? I was born in 1921. The first external influence in my life was the 1914-18 war: the Great War, which I relived in my father's nightmares and rages (the effect of two years on the Western Front and a year in a German P.O.W. camp). In my infancy men emptied the dustbins, wearing the khaki tunics they had worn on the Somme and at Passchendaele, and an ex-serviceman played a concertina in the gutter, with the Mons Star and his other medals on his chest. All this is as important—or more important—to me as the retreat out of Burma in which I actually did play my little part as a young soldier. And behind the Great War there is Victorian England, solemn, awesome, solid and sure: as it still remained in the 1920s in my grandparents' house, where everything was mahogany and enormous, and there were velvet hangings in faded purple or moss green, with tassels innumerable and the frozen family photographs of Granny and Grandad and their seven children—only two of whom had died when young—with the others who had become missionaries or schoolteachers or respectable clerks. For the Victorian age certainly didn't end in 1901: The Empire Exhibition at Wembley in 1924 (which I dimly remember) was vintage Victoriana. Did the Victorian age finally end when Dr Beeching closed all those rambling branch lines with their period stations and signal boxes? The age of Victoria, I submit, is still with us. To borrow the observation of one of the most suave and subtle interpreters of the period:

> They came into a world where medieval prejudice, Tudor law, Stuart economics, and Hanoverian patronage still luxuriated in wild profusion, and by the straight and narrow paths they cut we are walking still.[1]

In our England of the 1970s, we can still reach an older, gentler England. It lies between the Chiltern escarpment and the Mendips and Quantock hills of the West. In Thame and Burford and Malmesbury there is still a lingering presence of Arthur and Alfred; and the shearing of sheep and the building of churches is what really counts. This is an England that missed the Victorian revolution, or viewed it only *via* Barchester. And, of course, there is the contemporary scene which is free-floating, free of the past—Basildon, the University of Sussex—most of our south-east subtopia—computerised, transistorised; in a vapid vacuum, not sure whether it belongs to Scandinavia or California. But the ecology of the England in which most of us do our work—Westminster, Whitehall, the City of London, Manchester, Huddersfield—is solid Victorian still. The institutions which—doubtless, with decreasing credibility—still provide our national framework (like the Two-Party System, the T.U.C., Redbrick and Oxbridge, the Civil Service, the voluntary societies) are Victorian to the core. Take the Victorian contribution out of Britain, and what is there left? Practically nothing. Time and time again, if one looks for the origin of some British tradition, it goes back to about 1870, and not before.

IF BENJAMIN JOWETT or the Prince Consort were to visit one of the new universities founded in the 1960s—say, Lancaster University on its bare hillside, or York University round its great pond—they would be extremely puzzled by the architecture and even more puzzled by the students. But they would be reassured to find that basic things were the same. These brand-new institutions have fitted themselves up with colleges, with

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[1] G. M. Young, *Victorian England: Portrait of an Age* (1936), p. 10. Young is specifically identifying the Utilitarians.

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Deans and Provosts; but above all they have preserved the pattern of study of reformed Victorian Oxbridge. The single-subject honours degree remains the norm. The admass youth of 1972 is being equipped to join the Victorian clerisy and laity of the upper professional class. Youngsters who will become supermarket managers and computer programmers and TV whizz-kids and PR stooges are being trained in a narrow, unfunctional discipline: suitable for providing a generalist upper civil servant, or a country parson, with intellectual teeth.

Parliament remains the complete, copper-bottomed home of Victoriana. Every detail has come down from the days of Gladstone and Disraeli. Even the methods of causing chaos were invented by Parnell and his followers in the 1880s. For those of us who don't get into Parliament, fighting a general election is likely to be our most Victorian experience. I do not, of course, refer to the non-stop TV cliffhanger which reaches its moment of truth with Robert McKenzie in front of the camera at 3 a.m. on the morning after. I mean the election at constituency level, especially through the candidate's eyes. From the first fervent nomination meeting to the final stony-eyed speech of thanks to the returning officer and his staff, the whole ritual is Victorian in its every detail. We still maintain the convention that this is a choice between Mr Bloggs and Mr Snooks—and there is the curious survival that some people actually *do* mark their cross for Mr Bloggs, though if he becomes an M.P., the poor man will just be a cog in a voting machine.

Perhaps because I am a Nonconformist, by origin and by choice, I was specially conscious of the Victorian shadows of the great Nonconformist conscience. Not only did I have the support of the chapel network (still a factor even in an outer London suburb), but I also responded to challenges on Nonconformist lines. In general, I rejected all demands by pressure groups (it gave me particular pleasure to tell the National Farmers' Union that I would not answer their greedy questions), but one appeal I could not deny—that of the Lord's Day Observance Society. How right they are . . . and I'm sure the ghost of my grandfather, that veteran deacon and Sunday-school teacher (whom I always confused with God—the same long white hair and beard and twinkling blue eyes), must have given me his benison.

THE VICTORIAN AGE bequeathed to us not only our certainties, but also most of our uncertainties. It was then that cities expanded because public utilities were invented: and it was then that the alienation of the city's outcasts was revealed. Technology advanced to solve all problems—and to create those that were insoluble. Organised religion gave support to millions, while men for the first time openly doubted a Divine purpose. Liberty was claimed as the birthright of all—and imperial authority reached its widest extent. As the age's most popular novelist declared:

> It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, its was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us. . . .[2]

THIS IS OUR STRANGE inheritance: thesis and antithesis. Maybe—to change from the general to the particular—this helps to explain that inexplicable measure, the Immigration Act of 1971. Here is legislation taking up Parliament's time when urgent problems confront a bewildered nation. Yet it is quite irrelevant: it is designed to stem a "flood" of coloured immigrants, when that flood was reduced to a trickle over five years before, though it can still be described by a progressive Tory M.P. as "this regrettably restrictive but unavoidably necessary Bill".

The kernel of the bill is the definition of a "right of abode" for those who "belong" to Britain and to exclude as aliens all those who do not belong. To be a belonger one has to be "a citizen of the United Kingdom and Colonies who has, or is the child or grandchild of a person having . . . that citizenship", or if "he is a Commonwealth citizen and is the child or grandchild of a person having at any time had citizenship of the United Kingdom and Colonies by his birth in the United Kingdom." This principle of patriality can be seen as an extension of the Darwinian principle of Natural Selection, whereby we are immutably shaped by a combination of ancestry and environment. A Jamaican or a Pakistani is immutably different: he doesn't have the background which qualifies him for patriality.

If I am right in arguing that, in order to understand ourselves, we need to understand how much of our grandparents there is still within us, then Christine Bolt's *Victorian Attitudes to Race*[3] is an important contribution.

Historical "attitudes" studies have become the vogue recently. A rather good example was

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[2] Charles Dickens, in the opening paragraph of *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859).

[3] *Victorian Attitudes to Race*. By CHRISTINE BOLT. Routledge & Kegan Paul, £3.

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V. G. Kiernan's *The Lords of Human Kind: European Attitudes to the outside world in the Imperial Age* (1969). Anybody coming fresh to the literature will be astonished and appalled at the accumulation of evidence showing how Europeans asserted and justified their superiority over those they conquered. But does anybody ever come fresh to the literature? In the ethnocentric way in which history is taught in Britain, it seems as though the Empire really had to be acquired because the natives were behaving so badly: being so beastly about the Black Hole of Calcutta, and about the British women and children at Cawnpore, and about Gordon at Khartoum. There may be a vague memory that the Maoris refused to fight on Sunday, and showed other sporting traits which qualified them eventually for the All Blacks rugger team. But the "Other Side of the Medal" (under which title Edward Thompson, the elder, wrote an account of the British Indian Mutiny atrocities) is never revealed. Knowledge about the enslavement of Africa is likely to be limited to the information that slavery was first abolished by the British in 1833; thus showing how much more humane we were than other Western nations. In a curious way, Mr Kiernan's book which marshals the damning evidence of imperial domination so comprehensively, becomes an apologia for empire and ends with the comforting conclusion that Europe may now "recollect in tranquillity its adventures across the seven seas."

Miss Bolt has not produced yet another study of the imperial Britisher at work: the Man on the Spot. She explores the interaction of metropolitan public opinion, in all its complexity, with the ideas and practices of those on the spot. Perhaps realising that we all approach the subject with half-formed or half-baked ideas already, she seeks to develop her narrative by a kind of "total" technique, intellectual saturation bombing, as it were. Herself an American specialist, she has carried out an extremely thorough survey of all the secondary sources concerning the different angles of the subject, as well as some manuscript sources, especially relating to the anti-slavery movement. This technique of total exposure is wearing on the reader. It is somewhat like an archaeological dig, in which one has to sift through a mass of dirt and shards and decide what are the really significant finds. Different readers will interpret the book in their own individual ways: and, although it is a bit unfair to Miss Bolt, I propose to do just that.

MANY STUDENTS OF RACE argue that Racism only developed from a latent to an active form with the rise of Western, 19th-century imperialism. There seems to be plenty of evidence that active racial attitudes existed long before. What is different is that the second half of the nineteenth century witnessed the application of developing scientific theories to Racist conceptions of a measurable scale of humankind. Among the many "contemporary" concepts which really go back to the Victorians is that of "relevant", "concerned" science. Previously, science and theology had engaged in battle, but it was only with Auguste Comte and Herbert Spencer that "social science" (and sociology) arrived. The social application of Darwin's biological theories led to the concept of the "Survival of the Fittest": a scientific explanation of how those in power could assert superiority for modern, progressive reasons. The evidence suggests that Racism had assumed an active form in the British overseas empire right at the beginning of Victoria's reign. The Darwinian revelation injected scientific and sociological content; and the Indian Mutiny and the "minimutiny" in Jamaica provided the "rivers of blood" to justify prejudices. The last quarter of the century saw Racism reach a plateau, being manifested in the Empire which had then attained its widest bounds. Today, in the Imperial afterglow, we survey our lost domains from the same plateau of Racism in what is now our supposedly beleaguered island home.

In one of the earliest of the historical "attitudes" studies (and still one of the best), Percival Spear's *The Nabobs*,[4] there is a chapter on "Racial Relations." Indians and British were still meeting on a basis of something like equality of power and influence: Indian princes and merchants encountering English officers and factors. Dr Spear gathered together in an appendix a selection of contemporary observations by Europeans and Indians about each other. Most of the Europeans' views are derogatory. But they become noticeably more condemnatory as the eighteenth century comes to an end. Spear points out that

> It is one of the ironies of Indo-European relations in India that the purging of the administration [by Cornwallis] coincided with the widening of the racial gulf.

In other words, by eliminating Indians from the higher administration in the name of efficiency, probity, and reform, the march of Racism was accelerated. Mountstuart Elphinstone, a survival from the 18th-century India of the princes, reflected:

[4] T. G. P. Spear, *The Nabobs: A Study of the Social Life of the English in Eighteenth Century India* (1932).

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> It has sometimes struck me that the fault of our younger politicians [he means British political officers]—who have never seen the Indian states in the days of their power—is a contempt for the natives.

THIS CONTEMPT has been most vehemently expressed by the man who above all others represents the "New Man" of the early Victorian age: T. B. Macaulay. Was he not the C. P. Snow of his day? Long-distance literary runner, habitué of the corridors of power, the applicant of scientific method to government; he also ended up in the House of Lords. Here he is on the Bengalis, in the *Edinburgh Review* (October 1841):

> The physical organization of the Bengalee is feeble even to effeminacy. He lives in a constant vapour bath. His pursuits are sedentary, his limbs delicate, his movements languid . . . Courage, independence, veracity are qualities to which his constitution and his situation are equally unfavourable. His mind . . . is weak even to helplessness for purposes of manly resistance; but . . . what the horns are to the buffalo, what the paw is to the tiger, what the sting is to the bee . . . deceit is to the Bengalee. Large promises, smooth excuses, elaborate tissues of circumstantial falsehood, chicanery, perjury, forgery are [his] weapons.

This was the verdict of the man who had been the Law Member of the Governor General's Council in Calcutta. It is an interesting comment on the effectiveness of British higher education in India that a present-day scholar, Professor R. K. Das Gupta, can be found asseverating that Macaulay was right!

> This [account by Macaulay] is not inspired by racial pride or sheer contempt. It is a true picture of the Bengal that Macaulay knew. . . . The truth of Macaulay's remark . . . is to me beyond question.[5]

Thus, didactic Racism had arrived. What of moral Racism? Evangelical Christian missionaries are often condemned for conveying to their supporters in Britain a picture of the inhabitants of Asia and Africa as dark and degraded: "Where every prospect pleases, and only man is vile. . . ." But they did not assert that the inferiority of the Heathen was ineradicable. The sinner could be saved and transformed (as, of course, in Manchester or Glasgow). William Carey of Serampore might write: "The Hindus were literally sunk into the dregs of vice", but he also believed that

> India can never be turned from her idolatry . . . unless the grace of God rest abundantly on converted Indians . . . In my judgment it is on native evangelists that the weight of the great work must ultimately rest.

To turn to a "literary" source—*The Coral Island* by R. M. Ballantyne (1857)—surely one of the great formative influences in the lower middle classes during the 19th century, the relation between present degradation and potential transformation is made quite clear. Here are the unregenerate Heathen:

> Then I saw that these inhuman monsters were actually launching their [war] canoe over the living bodies of their victims. But there was no pity in the breasts of these men. Forward they went in ruthless indifference, shouting as they went, while high above their voices rang the dying shrieks of those wretched creatures as, one after another, the ponderous canoe passed over them, burst the eyeballs from their sockets, and sent the life-blood gushing from their mouths.

(In how many Sunday schools was this horror-comic presented as a prize for good attendance!) But here is a pirate speaking of the regenerate Pacific islanders:

> We find that wherever the savages take up Christianity they always give over their bloody ways and are safe to be trusted. I never cared for Christianity myself . . . but a man with half an eye can see what it does for these black critters.

THE GREAT INDIAN REVOLT of 1857 certainly did not create Victorian Racism. But it linked together the domestic, metropolitan public with the Man on the Spot in waves of outraged feeling. The natives must be inexorably punished for daring to strike down their white masters. The literary men spoke almost with one voice, from the rhymester, Martin Tupper, demanding that India be lined with "Groves of Gibbets" to the Poet Laureate, Tennyson, urging the nation to be "strong with the strength of the race to command, to obey, to endure" ("*The Defence of Lucknow*"). The Man on the Spot needed no encouragement. Here is an ancient British soldier reminiscing at Meerut fifty years later:

> It's nice and peaceful around this tree, but in the early days of the Mutiny it was not so nice and peaceful around it. Many a morning before breakfast I was present here and assisted to hang a dozen of more of the rebel Pandies on the branches. I got so used to it that I found on the mornings that I was not lending a hand to hang a few of them that I could not relish my breakfast . . . Ay, the more Pandies that were hanged, the larger the breakfast I ate.[6]

[5] C. H. Philips (ed.), *Historians of India, Pakistan and Ceylon* (1961), p. 236.

[6] Recounted by Private Frank Richards, *Old-Soldier Sahib* (1936).

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As Miss Bolt indicates, the only reservation about this descent into genocide was voiced by the Evangelicals; or some of them. Herbert Edwardes, one of the heroes of the North-West Frontier, the man who saved Peshawar, was one such. Speaking in 1860 at Exeter Hall (the great Evangelical platform) he interpreted the Mutiny as a warning from the God who had so often warned ancient Israel:

> You have neglected the charge I gave you. You have ruled India for yourselves, and I have chastened you; I have humbled you in your pride . . . I have brought you within one step of ruin . . . I say to you: England, that I once more consign this people to your charge. I say to you that I once more put you upon your trial; and I say to you, take warning from the past.[7]

But there were not many speaking with this much humility. Miss Bolt rightly cites G. O. Trevelyan's *The Competition Wallah* (2nd ed., 1866) as one of the few reports from India immediately after the great revolt which is critical of the overt racial attitude of almost all the British. Yet Trevelyan includes an account of British heroism in the Mutiny which is straight out of *The Boy's Own Paper:*

> As long as Englishmen love to hear of fidelity, and constancy, and courage bearing up the day against frightful odds, there is no fear lest they forget the name of "the little house at Arrah" . . .

Among the few Englishmen to question the prevailing racial satisfaction in the pattern of dominance was A. O. Hume, often called "the Father of the Indian National Congress." Giving evidence to an official commission years later, he recalled one British district officer whose racial fibre was inadequate:

> a good little gentleman, but of unwarlike tendencies, [he] was getting troubled, and in the dusk of the evening getting into his buggy he quietly started down the road.

He was chased by an Indian official, brought back, and the orders were issued by the Indian deputy in his name until he was relieved.[8]

By some strange empathy, Queen Victoria penetrated the intervening layers of British official crassness towards an understanding of the situation of inequality which the Mutiny had so appallingly exacerbated. She instructed her Prime Minister to issue a proclamation which

> should breathe feelings of generosity, benevolence and religious feeling, pointing out the privileges which Indians will receive in being placed on an equality with the subjects of the British Crown.[9]

For more than fifty years, Indian political leaders quoted from the Queen's proclamation, and it was reprinted every year in the preliminaries to the proceedings of the Indian National Congress. The Queen's sensitivity was not shared by her son, the future Edward VII. In 1881, at a party, he received Kalakaua, King of Hawaii, before the German Crown Prince. When the latter protested, Edward bluntly replied:

> Either the brute is a king, or he's a common or garden nigger; and if the latter, what's he doing here?[10]

Meanwhile, science had taken over from religion. The publication of Darwin's *Origin of Species* (1859) was the principal intellectual event of the nineteenth century, greater than *Das Kapital,* which owes much to it:

> The theory of natural selection is grounded on the belief that each new variety, and ultimately each new species, is produced and maintained by having some advantage over those with which it comes into competition; and the consequent extinction of the less-favoured forms almost inevitably follows. (Ch. 6)

Considered revolutionary, Darwin's theory is in reality conservative in its implications: for he consistently stresses the infinite longevity of evolution, "the fine gradations" of change. Miss Bolt details the ways in which Darwinian theory was applied to the struggle between the races of the world. From biology, Darwin produced a good deal of evidence to show that "hybridism" is most frequently sterile. Here is a primitive application of that hypothesis (the reader is invited to guess the date of this before consulting the footnote):

> The offspring of Esau and his alien Hittite wives were the ancestors of the racially mixed Edomite people, later identified as Idumeans, who were such a thorn in the side of the Jews for hundreds of years, indeed right down to the coming of Christ, when they disappeared from the pages of history. The lesson to be learnt from this needs no elaborating: it is not meet for the races . . . to interbreed.[11]

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[7] Lady Edwardes, *Memorials of the Life and Letters of Sir Herbert Edwardes* (1886), Vol. II, pp. 267-8.

[8] *Proceedings of the Public Service Commission, 1886-7* (Cmd. 5327, Vol. VI), p. 111.

[9] Benton and Esher (eds.), *The Letters of Queen Victoria,* John Murray (1908), Vol. III, p. 298.

[10] Philip Magnus, *King Edward the Seventh* (1964), p. 171.

[11] H. B. Isherwood, *Religion and The Racial Controversy.* Its date is not 1871 but 1971: Neo-Victorianism?

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Communities were likely to be "beaten and supplanted" (Darwin) when their habitat was invaded by superior beings.

The apparently imminent extinction of the North American Indian and the Australian Bushman seemed to provide evidence for this deduction. When the American and West Indian Negro was clearly *not* disappearing but, on the contrary, increasing in numbers, Darwinian logic should have deduced that he was not an inferior but a competitor with the white man! Few Victorians were so logical: though Charles Darwin certainly grasped the implication of his own theory.

Miss Bolt singles out the revolt of 1865 in Jamaica as "The Turning Point" in Victorian race relations, when the philanthropists and reformers turned away from the cause of the Negro, which they had championed in the emancipation movement, as applied to the West Indies and the United States. They had always really been much more *against* a system (slavery) than they had been *for* the Negro, even though an element in the movement was the conception of the "State of Nature" as sublime, the environment of the "Noble Savage." One man was singled out more than any other Negro as the symbol of the Noble Savage: Toussaint L' Ouverture. Wordsworth wrote a sonnet to his memory, and John Greenleaf Whittier made him the subject of a long poem:

> *—For the time shall come,*
> *Yea, even now is nigh,—*
> *When, everywhere thy name shall be*
> *Redeemed from color's infamy.*

The Jamaican revolt was accepted by many as evidence that the Negro was just a savage. Miss Bolt quotes from *The Times* (13 October 1865):

> It seems impossible to eradicate the original savageness of the African blood. . . . Wherever he attains to a certain degree of independence there is the fear that he will resume the barbarous life and fierce habits of his African ancestors. . . .
>
> Alas for grand triumphs of humanity and the improvement of races and the removal of primeval curses, and the expenditure of twenty millions sterling [compensation to the planters at emancipation].

The repressive actions of Eyre, Governor of Jamaica, were condemned by some and defended by others.[12] For the prosecution: John and Jacob Bright, John Stuart Mill, Edward Forster, Goldwin Smith, A. V. Dicey, Henry Fawcett, T. H. Green, Charles Darwin, Huxley, Spencer, and Lyell. No special surprises here: this is the sort of combination of emotional and intellectual liberalism and radicalism that would not fail when tested. But what about the defence? Tennyson, Charles Kingsley, Carlyle—no surprises yet. But Dickens and Ruskin: what are they doing in this band? The argument followed lines familiar then and since. The Negro was politically immature, easily led astray by agitators, could not be made equal with Whites by laws, when nature had made him unequal. The red herring of natural selection was often crudely drawn: pictures of Negroes portrayed them as huge of jaw, thick of lip, foreheads low, gait shambling—an ape in more or less human form. (Fascinatingly, the Japanese were portrayed, 1942-5, in exactly similar fashion.) It was left for Frederic Harrison to drag the argument back from the racial pit into the political arena:

> This is a question far deeper than sect or colour . . . The question is whether *legality* is to be co-extensive with the Queen's rule, or whether . . . [we] are to be governed by the irresponsible will of able, absolute and iron-willed satraps. It is on this ground that it so peculiarly concerns the working classes. They alone are as yet untainted by the reckless injustice with which our empire has been won and kept.

Miss Bolt is probably right in arguing that racial contempt was much stronger for Africans than Asians. Still, attitudes to Indians hardened as they acquired a Western education and became (potentially) competitors in the Survival of the Fittest. Indians began to enter the Indian Civil Service in direct competition with Oxbridge. This, Sir John Strachey (uncle of Lytton Strachey) calls "nothing less than absurd":

> Not the least important part of the competitive examination of the young Englishman was passed for him by his forefathers, who, as we have a right to assume, have transmitted to him not only their physical courage, but the powers of independent judgment, the decision of character, the habits of thought, and generally those qualities that are necessary for the government of men. . . . The stock-in-trade with which Englishmen start in life is not that of the Bengalis.[13]

Strachey was a distinguished civil servant; his friend FitzJames Stephen (uncle of Virginia Woolf) was a judge and jurist. He wrote of "the great competitive examination . . . of which the first paper was set upon the field of Plassey, and the last (for the present) under the walls of Delhi and Lucknow." These men were intellectuals: yet they used the language of moral and physical endurance, and of mission, to

[12] See James Morris' article in ENCOUNTER (July 1970) "Eyre: Between Duty and Murder."
[13] John Strachey, *India* (1888), p. 358.

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justify racial inequality. Sir Charles Aitchison was also a scholarly official. When an Indian journalist ventured to tell the Public Service Commission that "in almost every post Natives work with as much credit as Europeans", Sir Charles thundered back:

> When two thousand Akazais came over the edge of the Black Mountain, the Assistant Commissioner of Oghi charged them at the head of fifty men of the Guides: do you think that if there had been a Native Assistant Commissioner at Oghi the same result would have followed?[14]

I AM ARGUING THAT the particular legacy of Victorian Racism was to provide an intellectual, even a scientific base: to make Racism "respectable." But, of course, the good old instinctive British tradition that one Englishman is worth ten, even a hundred, Frenchmen/Wogs, continued at the level of the common people.

The most authentic account of the life of the British private soldier in India that I have ever read is that by Frank Richards of the Royal Welch Fusiliers who enlisted in the year of Queen Victoria's death. His memoir is the record of a clear, unclouded eye and a soul that is free. Because he retained a kind of innocence, he put on to paper what I suppose all of us who served in India shied away from accepting: our role as racists. Almost any page would do, but here is a typical passage:

> The Connaughts had a reputation second to none for the way they handled the natives. When they arrived at a new station they soon expounded their views of the race-question and, by the time they left, there were not many natives around that place who even thought privately that they were the equals of white men. The Connaughts were strong believers in the saying that what had been conquered by the sword must be kept by the sword; but not being issued with swords, they used their boots and fists to such purpose, that they were more respected and feared by the natives than any other British unit in India. . . . Every British unit I came across, though perhaps not so brutal in their methods, handled the natives in the same manner. . . . They had to realize that they were our inferiors; and while they did so, all was well with them, and with us, and with the whole land of India, where they outnumbered us by a couple of thousands to one.[15]

Remote from all this, the old Queen brooded over her Indian Empire. She liked having Indian servants to wait at her table. One of these, Abdul Karim, became her confidant. He became the *Munshi*, because he gave her lessons in Hindustani. Her courtiers suspected him of international intrigue, and strenuous efforts were made to discredit him in the Queen's eyes, by producing evidence to suggest that his background was menial, whereas he represented himself as coming from a professional family. None of this affected the old Queen, who treated the *Munshi* more like a son. On her death, he was immediately sent packing, and the Queen's papers relating to the *Munshi* were burned under the personal supervision of Queen Alexandra. There was a comic quality about all this, as about so much of the Victorian court ritual, but the old Queen was no fool and she was determined to stamp out Racism. It was strictly forbidden to call Indians "black men" and Lord Salisbury (who was partial to this expression) was once made to apologise.[16]

Victoria's distant affection was not forgotten in India. Proceeding up the Ganges at Benares in July 1945 in a police launch flying the Union Jack, we passed a group of doddery, rustic pilgrims. Across the water came a thin cheer: *Maharani Vittori Ki Jai* (Long Live Queen Victoria). She would have liked that.

THERE IS NOT MUCH ELSE to cheer about. All the dilemmas of the Victorian age pullulated through the Edwardian and Georgian epilogue. This is particularly well brought out in Stephen Koss's recent study of John Morley.[17] Koss shows how neo-Darwinian ideas influenced Morley and his colleagues in India to go slow on political reform. Morley attributed the success of democracy in America to the fact that "four-fifths of the white people" in the United States could "trace their pedigrees to English forefathers": a good argument for the "patrial" provisions in the 1971 Immigration Bill! Indians did not have that advantage.

Miss Bolt ends her book by projecting Victorian dilemmas forward into the present day. She runs through the current literature, knitting themes together, and laying imperialism to rest, here in the United Kingdom where it all began. Surely, what we must now recognise is that we don't have something called "Race Relations", we have something called Racism. In the India of the eighteenth century it might have been possible to have race relations between a Parsi merchant

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[14] *Proceedings of the Public Service Commission* (1886-7), Vol. I, p. 165.

[15] Richards, *Old-Soldier Sahib*, pp. 142-3.

[16] Lytton Strachey's *Queen Victoria* only has a passing reference to the *Munshi*, but Elizabeth Longford in *Victoria R.I.* (1964) shows what a curiously dominant, almost obsessional part he played in everyone's calculations in the years 1887-1901.

[17] Stephen Koss, *John Morley at the India Office, 1905-1910*. (Yale University Press, 1969); see, especially, Ch. 7, "Race, History and Empire."

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and an English trader, or between a Maratha marcher baron and a British political envoy—just as between sovereign states one can have international relations. But when one dominant community is institutionalised into a situation of superior power and influence over powerless people, as in the Victorian Empire, and now in Powellite Britain, then there can only be what Philip Mason has called a pattern of dominance.[18] Unless the relationship of the native (or "patrial") British to the million-and-a-half former imperial subjects now living in their midst defies Darwin and undergoes a "great and sudden transformation" (and Darwin observed: "To admit all this, is, as it seems to me, to enter into the realms of miracle, and to leave those of science"), then it might seem the most we can hope for is to mitigate the crudest forms of discrimination, as Queen Victoria tried to do in her family and in her court and, less effectively, in her Empire.

ONE OF MY MOST QUAINTLY neo-Victorian moments was in January 1941 when our convoy of ships left Durban. Most of the troops were British and Australian reinforcements for Wavell in North Africa, though our ship was heading for India. Durban had been weird, after the blitz and the blackout. A dazzling town, with sunny beaches, and hotels ready to serve you with a five-course meal: and some local citizen would certainly insist on paying the bill. For Durban was British to the core, despite all those "Blacks Only" notices everywhere, and the warnings issued that a British serviceman going down a dark alley would probably be sand-bagged by Afrikaner extremists. Anyway, as we headed out to sea, we were accompanied by little yachts, on one of which was the Silver Lady, who sang to all the departing convoys. She sang a series of sentimental songs, like "White Cliffs of Dover", and then just before the little flotilla turned to leave us she burst into "There'll Always be an England." At all other times of my life I have, of course, known that song for what it is; but then, for a nostalgic moment, it became a kind of pledge between us all—British, Australian and South African—a kind of Diamond Jubilee moment. Part of the song goes:

The Empire too
We can depend on you

In 1941 we were depending fairly heavily on Indian forces in Africa, Spitfire Weeks in the West Indies, and other calls upon the loyalty of subject peoples. That absolutely authentic Victorian, Winston Churchill, was to write one year later (January 1942):

> The Indian troops are fighting splendidly, but it must be remembered that their allegiance is to the King Emperor and that the rule of the Congress and Hindoo priesthood machine would never be tolerated by a fighting race.[19]

However, it wasn't that simple. The Empire was cracking under internal and external pressures. Those of us who witnessed the last episodes of the retreat out of Burma in 1942, when white men fled ignominiously before brown men, leaving their own subjects to the attentions of the *Kempeitai*, the Japanese gestapo, knew that the last act of the imperial drama was being played. I was to spend four more years in cantonments and civil lines, Meerut, Bannu, Lucknow, Benares—in a faded Victorian assortment of clubs, hill stations, frontier posts, magistrate's courts—but it was an epilogue. Between 1947 and about 1965, the Empire was painlessly put to sleep, soothed by the Winds of Change. But was it altogether painless? There was the fuss over Dean Acheson's crack: "The British have lost an empire and not found a role"—the most obvious statement of the obvious. There was Suez 1956. Was this an aberration? Or was this the real Britain still? Decolonisation went on . . . to the barren rocks of Aden. But there were "our kith and kin", sticking it out in Rhodesia, and challenging the whole concept of multi-racialism. Although in the 1950s it looked as though the French were going through agonies in their decolonisation while we were doing splendidly, in the end they may have managed things better. For, as in a nervous breakdown, so much was bottled up by the British; until at last it seems to have exploded in the 1970s.

MY THESIS IS that, as good neo-Victorians, we still firmly believe that we have a purpose, a mission in the world. Scandinavians—or West Germans—seem to get on all right without a mission. But just as the French are always seeking *their* destiny, so are *we* in a more dumpy, less stylish fashion. The mission has been sought in different ways since World War II. In the 1950s, many believed that a new Commonwealth would provide the same opportunities as the old Empire. Rhodesian UDI ended that dream, and arms to South Africa supply a final sour taste in the mouth. Some thought that a "special relationship" with the United States would allow the old titan to continue, on the back of the new titan. For a growing number, during the 1960s,

[18] Philip Mason, *Patterns of Dominance* (1970).
[19] Nicholas Mansergh and E. W. R. Lumby (eds.), *India, The Transfer of Power, 1942-7* (1970), Vol. I, p. 14.

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the idea of Britain joining Europe was a brand-new mission to be accomplished. Very conveniently, for my purpose, Lord George-Brown has illustrated the connection between Empire and EEC in his new book, *In My Way* (1971):

> Britain's future rests upon her emergence as the leader of a new block in the world. . . . A new European block which would have the same power and influence in the world as the old British Commonwealth had in days gone by.

Or, as he is more succinctly reported in *The Guardian* (27 March 1971),

> We've got to go somewhere else now. We need a replacement for the Empire.

He may not deploy the oratory of Dilke or Chamberlain, but he is delivering a similar message. Few are ready to blurt it out, like George Brown, but there really are a lot of people who think as he does: that Europe needs Britain, not that Britain needs Europe:

> *The EEC too,*
> *We can depend on you.*

Probably it will be good for British morale to get into Europe. And the hard-headed Dutch and West Germans and Belgians, who today put up with French rhetoric, will be able to stand British didactics. But one serious consequence could be the further discounting of the black and brown Commonwealth. Finding a new mission in Europe may lead to all sorts of creative relationships with our continental neighbours. But in our present mood of Neo-Victorian Racism, we could finally renounce all responsibility for those whom we insisted *were* our responsibility when we made them accept our rule. An American said to me recently: "What has happened to the Heathen? . . . When I was a boy there was always a collecting box on the sideboard for the Heathen. Now they don't seem to be around any more. . . ." I have a feeling that the so-called Heathen have been discarded in our Winds of Change, leaving us to focus our attentions upon Europe. Still, there are a million-and-a-half "coloured" citizens in our midst. They won't just conveniently become extinct.

Are they to be our own internal empire, subject to our old-new forms of Racism? Or could the Victorian sense of mission be mobilised to create ways in which they can live as themselves, yet part of us? This would be a victory for the morality and science and progress in which our grandfathers believed: but which they did not seem to be able to practise.

Travel Sickness in Venice

And while St. George is given
the freedom of the city, his stallion,
a black Venice of muscle, nudges
someone's white mare in randy
good humour. Brave holiday
of bones: Victoria! Victoria!
Messer Carpaccio has cricked
his neck on the top hurdle
of the Lord, but the mouldy dragon
still cowers and spits. We all
imagine a hell where rain
is continuous and evening
comes down at every hour
with temper and warm gin.
I am the dragon with the dragon-breath,
the devil of dreams who sits out
eternity's witty lines. Time will win
when the painter's arm is black—
long live the dour Weekend of Nettles,
every colour changed to ochre
and deep imagination lost
on the coffee-skin of rain.

Peter Porter

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Rodney Pybus

from The Petroniad

Water warmed
to the temperature of blood
I lie, relax and begin
to ease the blade in,
slanting it into the vein:

red warm smoke in water—
a blood bath no less!

★

Caius, I wasn't expecting you—
pass me that bandage,
I'll repair this vein
and we can swap gossip
about our beloved leader
the imperial goitre Nero—
no, rather a swelling
in the groin of Rome:

I despair, Caius, I despair!
Everything in the hands
of that trigger-happy
paranoid lecher—
except me, thank heaven!

★

Do you remember those god-awful mornings
when he'd come barging in
to the bedroom
stinking of wine and semen
squawking "Come on, boys—
the royal cock's crowing!"
I wish I'd cut its bloody throat . . .

and do you remember him telling us
how at his birth his father said
that any child of Agrippina
and himself was bound to be
a real bastard and a public danger!

Now would the grammarians call that
litotes or *meiosis*
I wonder?

★

I'm tired of being the Imperial Trendy
By Appointment—
without my advice on style, he won't
get dressed, eat, sing,
or drop his pants

★

Here's my list, Caius
of all Nero's quirks, all
the vices, times and places:
all the boys and girls, Africans
and Turks he's screwed,
mothers, fathers, sisters,
all his whims, sober or pissed as
a newt, all his most perverse
desires, horizontal, vertical or reverse!

This will make a change
from the usual ante-burial
flattery: read on, Nero,
gross voluptuary—
read my last will and testament:
your last stand
is yet to come.

★

Caius: more warm water!
I'm taking off the bandage—
see the crimson smoke
spreading—another arm—
another vein . . .
the old saying: *venae,* V.D., vices . . .

The pulse weakens
I can feel the water in me
Me Titus Petronius

these are the *Arbiter dicta*

The water has been wined

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NOTES & TOPICS

Coming Through a Door with a Gun For Ever

On TV Violence

By Peter Black

LIKE THE MAJORITY of Britons who lived through the War, I have yet to see a person die violently. The last fist fight I saw in real life was in Sydney on a Saturday night eight years ago. No doubt many readers could say as much. *Physical* violence is no longer in the front of people's lives. It has been replaced by a more subtle kind of bullying. The fear of losing one's job, of not being able to pay one's way in old age, shackles a lot of people to work they dislike (and certainly would not have freely chosen) as ruthlessly as if the shackle were of steel and round their ankles. The jet planes terrorise the inhabitants of Middlesex as pitilessly as robber barons.

Motorcars oppress villages, Muzak bullies passengers in lifts. There is nothing to be done about it, because lawyers are the public's masters instead of its servants; law is often only for those who can afford it. Hence, as the psychiatrists long ago agreed, the appeal of simple fictional violence, which balances the human need for order and justice against the other need to keep problems resolvable by man and man.

These conclusions are nothing if not trite. The fact is it seems impossible to come up with any new thoughts about violence in entertainment. The BBC's Audience Research Department began a series of studies in April 1970, of the amount of violence in BBC and ITV programmes and what viewers thought about it.[1] Their findings were almost sheepishly unsensational and tend to confirm what common sense had already guessed, *e.g.*, violence tends to be what the viewer thinks is violent, real violence is more disturbing than stylised, most of us are unbothered by it but it disturbs the fearful and the unsteady. However, it suggests that things that hardly need proving are better for having been proved; and, in view of the often consciously dishonest argument about TV violence (it is dishonest to infer that violence in America is exacerbated by TV and to leave the lunatic gun-laws out of it), it is useful to have this bundle of evidence.

It defined violence as any act which might cause physical and/or psychological injury, hurt or death to persons, animals or property, whether intentional or accidental. "Accidental" violence and "property" were included to cover violence in non-fictional programmes such as news and current affairs. Violence could be verbal as well as visual, though if verbal it must express the intention of proceeding to visual violence. In the 21 weeks of programmes surveyed there were on average 1·3 violent incidents per programme; nearly half of them were in news and current affairs; a little more than one-third in drama, defined as anything from *Play For Today* to *Hawaii Five-O*.

Because the questions have to be put in a way to accommodate the humourless imagination of a computer these surveys always contain elements of the comic. You can have a good laugh at the section that analyses how far a particular programme reinforced attitudes held by the viewer. Three per cent admitted that the Morecambe & Wise show (the funniest series on TV at that time) had assisted their belief that aggression-was-justified-when-necessary. The same show helped another 6 per cent to realise that others-were-worse-off-than-they-were. *Worse Than Murder*, a grim account of the appalling London kidnapping and murder of Mrs Mackay, helped 10 per cent "a lot" by showing somebody-doing-things-they-couldn't-do-themselves. In general, however, the findings suggested that violence in TV follows a kind of pattern that satisfies needs that story-tellers have always known by instinct.

TYPICALLY, fiction on TV is about heroes who win. The bad characters are more violent than the good, are three times more likely to kill, are the sole inflictors of brutality and sadism, and have no just cause. The heroes' aggression is always a response ("he started it"); and their motives for violence—the well-being of family, home, society, humanity—are higher, though the higher the motive the less likely the hero is to return violence. (There are few of these heroes about.) Violence pays better in the short term than in the long, and on the whole it is not as profitable as non-violence.

This outline embodies timeless story values, as obvious to Hans Christian Andersen as to the writers of *The Saint*. Treatment of it varies according to the class of fiction. In the various series and feature films, violence is almost exclusively male (exceptions are *The Avengers* and a new ATV imitation, *Spyder's Web*); the characters are drawn in sharp black and white,

[1] Violence on Television. BBC Publication, £2.

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the ending shows complete victory and utter defeat. Plays (and some of the best British series such as *Softly Softly*, *Callan*, and *Public Eye*) sometimes show women as the aggressors or as the victims; characterisation and violence are more subtle, and the ending is sometimes inconclusive. British films are less violent than American, one reason simply being that the British do not make Westerns. Again, as you would expect, the wider the audience aimed at the less real the violence will be. ITV viewers are much less likely to be shown that violence bleeds and hurts. Comparatively subtle violence roused by personal quarrels is found more often on BBC-2 than BBC-1. In children's programmes the violence is almost always between known enemies, never between members of the same family.

What constitutes violence for viewers seems to hang on how real it seems. But here there has to be a division between the real real and unreal real. Reality in the news is regarded as disturbing but justifiable. In the fictions, reality is the ingredient that helps people to say that a scene is violent; it is disliked when its vividness seems unjustifiable. We don't like to see close-ups of people dying, to be able to identify with the victims, to watch a group attacking one person; we don't like unnecessarily cruel aggression as in *Big Breadwinner Hog* and *Mutiny on the Bounty*. Sadism, torture, the sudden, unexpected eruption of violence, unpunished aggression—all these types of aggression help to accumulate some sort of definition which again seems only common sense: violence is disturbing when it forces the viewer's imagination and conscience to think about it. When this does not happen it often is not seen as violence at all.

DISLIKE OF VIOLENCE is very closely linked with fear of it. Probably the type most disliked by ENCOUNTER readers is presented by the Manson type of story first imagined by the film *The Desperate Hours*, in which a gang of desperate and unreasonable crooks gain entry to a house by knocking on the door in the role of casual enquirer, brush past the opener, and terrorise everyone. I suppose it has become a standard nightmare for middle-class folks who live as I do in a rather lonely house. When I see one of these stories (a recent *Softly Softly* showed one, adding to my distress by failing to capture the crooks) fantasies of violent revenge bubble inside my skull, leaving no doubt of the strength of this link with dislike and fear.

This raises the peculiar coupling in some minds of violence on TV and sex on TV. The BBC's survey found that when its sample groups were discussing *Vendetta* (an action-adventure film series) violence was seldom brought up without some prompting by the researcher. Sex and bad language—the "kitchen-sink" play—were more commonly discussed. This certainly seems to be a national trait. We once had a housekeeper who referred to the sex act (it came up because she saw Oscar, one of our tom cats, at work on Alice under the lauristinus) as "being unkind." "Look, he's being unkind to her!" she exclaimed compassionately. Whether she was employing a regular euphemism or had coined it for our benefit I wouldn't care to say, but it showed how sex and violence, equally objectionable, were sewn together in her mind. I may be betraying quirks that would be better kept dark but surely to bracket sex and violence indicates a very rum attitude to sex? It is true that in sex games the players like to hurt each other, but the object is to increase pleasure, not to inflict pain as a threat or a penalty, which is the object of violence. To bracket an affectionate, unselfish, and life-bringing human act with cruelty, which is mankind's chief path to darkness and ruin, is outrageous; but it happens. Is it because sexual bullying and bad-language bullying are much more a part of everyday life than physical violence?

THERE ARE TWO GROUNDS for asking whether violence in TV should be more firmly restricted. One is that it encourages aggression by persuading audiences to accept violent solutions to real problems. The other is that violence imposes a cheap, easy and debasing limitation on TV fictions.

The first view is held by such as Mrs Mary Whitehouse, leader of the Viewers' and Listeners' Association, and Milton Shulman, TV critic of the London *Evening Standard*. Their view can be compressed as follows: there is so much television that watching it must affect people's behaviour, and so many people watch it that such effects must be of nation-wide size. Shulman's case rests on selections from surveys undertaken in America of the effect of TV on children. He quotes the psychologists Liebert and Baron:

> It has been shown convincingly that children are exposed to a substantial amount of violent content on TV and that they can remember and learn from such exposure. There is a direct causal link between exposure to TV violence and an observer's subsequent aggressive behaviour.[2]

Supporting these claims Shulman offered some crime statistics for Britain—45,000 violent crimes in 1971 compared with 7,884 in 1955—and invited us to consider that the first generation of children

[2] Milton Shulman, in the *Evening Standard*, 2 February 1972.

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raised in the telly-watching age had contributed "three or four times as many crimes to these statistics as those uninfluenced by TV in their earliest years."[3]

Mrs Whitehouse shares Shulman's conviction that TV can, and should, shoulder the blame. She has often argued that as advertisers use television because of its proved power to sell, its power to affect behaviour is proved also. If, after watching a commercial, you go out and buy the product, after watching *Hawaii Five-O* you may go out and kill a policeman. It is convenient to be able to reduce complex problems to such simplicities, but what the effectiveness of the advertisers does in point of fact demonstrate is that commercials are very good at *anticipating* audience's consumer tastes and then supplying them. When they try to persuade the public against its will they fail, as when they offer the hard way against the easy. Whether committing violence is against the public will I leave to one's general experience of existence.

MY BELIEF IS that nearly all viewers are perfectly aware that the entertainment they see on the screen has little to do with the business of living. They would no more break into a house after watching a burglary on *Z-Cars* than, after watching athletics on *Grandstand*, they would try to run a four-minute mile. The Whitehouse-Shulman case ignores known facts about human behaviour. All children reproduce violence as play and continue to do so when grown up (in the form of competitive games). They also acquire with maturity a kind of understanding of themselves; they learn to itch, as the saying is, only where they can scratch; they also acquire a conscience, a sense of right and wrong and a preference for right. That this must be so is proved by the simple truth that if it were not so mankind would never have got any place. This strengthens the survey's finding that for most of us violence simply is not

[3] A more general form of this thesis is argued by Professor H. J. Eysenck, of the Maudsley Hospital, in his new book, *Psychology is About People*: "If I were asked by some Martian invader how one could best destroy the human race without overt show of arms, I would have to say that the destruction of the moral and ethical standards which alone maintain a society would be the best method; and in order to achieve this aim I would have to say that the unrestrained and continued showing of violence on television and film screens throughout this country, day in and day out, was by far the easiest and cheapest way. People ask wonderingly why there has been such a terrible outbreak of violence in the USA, where television programmes of this kind have of course been showing for much longer than anywhere else, and where saturation has been much more complete. I would answer that this is precisely what one would have predicted on psychological principles. But of course nobody asks psychologists about these things. . . ."

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an important issue. We know where we are with it.

It appears from the follow-up interviews that those who complain most about TV violence are the fearful, the meek, and the introverted. The survey does not offer much evidence about TV violence as a stimulator of behaviour. Viewers were asked to indicate the extent to which 17 programmes had helped them to feel it wasn't too bad a thing to "put the boot in" when they thought it was needed. Interpreting this as "helped them to feel that aggression was encouraged", the survey found inconclusive and sometimes contradictory evidence. One programme monitored was a *Play for Today* called "When The Bough Breaks", a touching and painfully honest piece about the maltreatment of a baby by its mother. Its object was to show that this kind of violence is committed by women less capable than others of standing up to hard conditions. The violence was realistic and disturbing. The queer thing is that 20 per cent (a high figure) felt encouraged to "put the boot in", much the same proportion as those who responded similarly to a Wild West film and to *Star Trek*. The survey understandably reaches no hard conclusion.

> It must be emphasised that the fact that many portrayals of violence on TV have little significance for most of their viewers does not imply that such portrayals are harmless, while the variability of individual responses to violence serves as a reminder that all modes of aggression demand consideration.

One important question is posed by the handful of disturbed persons who are undoubtedly predisposed to violence. They can pick up some useful tips from what they read and see. It is reasonable to say that the unbalanced mind of the Moors murderer, Brady, was fed by his reading of the Marquis de Sade; what is not reasonable is to say that the reading of Sade unbalanced his mind. Persons who, for some reason that almost without fail stretches back into an affection-starved childhood, have trouble with sex, sometimes get into difficulties through reading pornography, which for most of us is as harmless and pleasurable as studying well-illustrated cookery books or reducing exercises. (The "Festival of Light" people exploit these poor creatures as though they were part of the mass.) The question is: Should the great majority who are not harmed by violence forgo whatever pleasure these TV programmes give us, for the sake of the handful for whom they can be troublesome obstacles? Society hasn't made up its mind about this. It has assented to the principle in controlling the Drink-&-Breath-Test laws. It isn't admitted to other areas—a news item about a bomb hoax on a hotel always produces a little

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wave of similar hoaxes; but the news item is not suppressed on that account. There is obviously a case that it should be. There is the opposite case, for no society can manage its affairs as though everybody were a nut.

Then there is the question about violence limiting TV fictions. Here you have to consider the nature of TV as a mass entertainment. Most of the fictions will belong to the Action-Adventure category. The theme of most will be: How the hero escapes the threatened danger—or (as Merle Miller put it) forty thousand crazy Berbers are rushing towards Cairo and only you, Dick Daring, can stop them. The hero is always in a series—incidentally this one fact defuses much of the violence, for the audience knows the hero will be back next week. Because TV is a mass medium, watched through an evening, producers do not want to "fatigue" the audience by making it "concentrate too hard" all the time. So the Action-Adventure series is a relaxing one. The hero's problem is physical, sensational in that it is meant to be felt through the audience's senses, and its resolution will also be physical. But it need not be violent in the sense that he slugs or shoots someone. Any kind of physical resolution would be as appealing. The attraction of violence to a mass medium with so much time to fill is that it is the simplest way of involving the audience. As Raymond Chandler said: When in doubt, have a man come through the door with a gun. And the appeal never seems to wear out. We see that although sport is indeed the accepted substitute for aggressive violence it has never attracted a fiction series. This is not because it cannot be done—fast colour film and hand-held cameras have made everything possible—but because a golf game, a show-jumping final, an archery contest, is interesting once or twice only. A man can come through a door with a gun for ever. But this is a fact that TV could accept as an imaginative challenge.

One ought to make it clear that in a good many series, such as *Softly Softly* and *The Trouble Shooters*, the violence is incidental, part of the intention of setting down a slab of life. It would falsify the thing to leave it out. It's the series which rely on the perennial appeal of aggressive violence that vulgarise and limit TV.

There is a huge opening for a broadening of the definition of action and of adventure. (How ludicrous it is, when you think of it, that the setting of Hawaii is only a backcloth for shoot-outs and punch-ups and cars screeching round corners at 80 miles an hour.) Perhaps someone could devise a series that set up an action problem but let the hero win by superior cunning. It was the basis of a lot of the fairy stories they used to tell before the telling was handed over to television. Since then, alas, the writer's imagination has been cramped within a few safe, known boundaries.

D'Annunzio & Mussolini

New Letters—By FRANÇOIS BONDY

"EVERY LEADER is an individual response to a collective demand." Thus Leon Trotsky on the subject of Adolf Hitler. But when there was a collective demand for a leader in the Italy of 1919 the response was twofold—Gabriele D'Annunzio and Benito Mussolini.

Both had seen active service in the World War, and both, opposing Giolitti's neutralism, had advocated Italy's entry on the side of France. D'Annunzio, the older by twenty years, and world-famous since the 1890s, had declared himself earlier than Mussolini, who at first had been very strongly opposed to Italy's entry. And whereas the Forli socialist, wounded on the Isonzo after a brief spell at the front, was able to return to his business as a publicist, the fifty-year-old poet from Pescara remained to the end the most intrepid of pilots, having previously served in the cavalry, the infantry, and at sea. He had made himself a legend with his flights over Vienna and Trieste, had lost one eye and was the idol of the *Arditi*, a mixture of élite troops and swashbucklers with rough manners and rather criminal leanings. Later, as the self-appointed "Regent" of Fiume, which he called Quarnero, he had signed his decrees *Il mutilato di guerra*—"the war-wounded."

D'Annunzio's fifteen months escapade in Fiume, beginning in September 1919, represented the first crack in the post-war West European order of Versailles and Trianon, the ominous foreshadowing of the era of freebooters in a world which President Wilson had sought to make "safe for democracy." Self-styled Nietzschean supermen would all be turning nationalist.

D'Annunzio—like his French contemporary, Maurice Barrès—had moved from the erotic fervour and self-indulgent egotism of the *Übermensch* to extreme nationalist passion. For the cosmopolitan whose greatest success had been gained in Paris (he had fled there to escape his creditors) and who had been influenced by Nietzsche, Strindberg,

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Wagner and Dostoevsky, this was a logical step. But to the man from the Abruzzi the "Italianness" of Dalmatia was a rather less genuine conviction than the Frenchness of the sundered provinces was to Barrès, the man from Lorraine. By the boldness of his act in proclaiming the free city of Fiume to be a part of Italy (it won him the sympathy and support of the frustrated Italian army and navy), D'Annunzio furnished Fascism with a dramatic example. But more than this, he gave it much of his own style. The famous war-cry *Eja, Eja, allala* was his, as was the slogan *a noi!* (to us); and he was also responsible for the militia uniform with the tasselled cap. In a régime in which gesture, rhetoric, and ceremonial pomp played so large a part, such externals were by no means unimportant. Above all, D'Annunzio's March on Fiume set the pattern for Mussolini's "March on Rome"—the perfect example of how a *fait accompli* could be brought about.

D'ANNUNZIO, on 12 September 1919, did not merely annex Fiume, which was recognised as a free city by the Italian Government; he reached out beyond it to purely Croatian villages and islands. In fact he grabbed everything he could lay hands on, going as far south as Zara (now Yugoslavian Zadar), and in so doing won not only the plaudits of the Right but the respect of even the extreme Left. He was turned out at Christmas 1920, by a few warning shots from an Italian warship. This encounter, which he thenceforth described as "the bloody Christmas *(Natale di sangue)*", cost four lives. During his "regency" of Fiume he had held himself to be the uncrowned ruler of Italy, believing that he would be as warmly welcomed in Rome as he had been in the free city, and did not doubt for a moment that the Italian people would grant him "unlimited power."

To Mussolini D'Annunzio was an ally and a model, but also a rival: was there room for two freebooters? But D'Annunzio was no politician. He lacked the patience for long-term manoeuvre and indeed for any kind of activity that did not occur in the full glare of the arc-lights accompanied by resounding proclamations and a roll of drums. Mussolini was altogether more astute, more cool-headed and realistic: he was, moreover, entirely concentrated upon the achievement of real power, whereas D'Annunzio revelled in heroic attitudes and liked to think of himself as the great artist who may now and then descend to the level of politics but never loses sight of the fact that "Art comes before country." While Mussolini built his State, D'Annunzio was concerned with his statue.

D'ANNUNZIO'S WRITINGS are now going through a new period of reassessment. His influence on Stefan George, Hofmannsthal and Heinrich Mann; on Montherlant (who acknowledges it) and possibly on Aragon and Malraux (who don't), on the film-director Luchino Visconti, and many others—this is due not solely to the revival of a fashion and attitude of mind but also to the element of modernity in D'Annunzio's books which makes him appear the literary, if not the chronological, contemporary of James Joyce and Thomas Mann. His importance in Germany at his peak period (despite the bad German translations) may be gathered from Peter de Mendelsohn's recent history of the famous S. Fischer Verlag. Indeed, Thomas Mann frequently warned his brother Heinrich against D'Annunzio's "overblown versifying." The comprehensive, if not very accurate, biography of D'Annunzio by Philippe Jullian which has recently been published in France—and the numerous critical surveys of the *fin-de-siècle* "decadents", the *Stil Liberty* and *Art Nouveau*, which cannot disregard him—show him to have been part of a movement which has had an artistic posterity. It may be said, indeed, that compared with *il Duce* D'Annunzio has had the better of it. The forerunner of fascism did not become a fascist fellow-traveller but he continued to think of himself as the *Duce*'s mentor and soothsayer. He was the great Independent living in the honourable and illustrious "inner exile" of Vittoriale on Lake Garda. But he did not feel his independence threated by the Duce's munificence, including the very costly publication of his *Complete Works*. Mussolini may have been more realistic when he exclaimed:

> If you can't pull out a rotten tooth, you have to fill it with gold. . . .

The *Carteggio*, the uncensored collection of letters exchanged between Mussolini and D'Annunzio which has just been published (in Milan by Mondadori), will contribute nothing to the objective assessment of the poet. On the contrary, this correspondence of 19 years has more to tell us about the prosaic, purposeful politician than about the faun-like, self-worshipping peacock-figure, the man who in a letter about a medallion he designed (which was disapproved of on account of its "anatomical realism"), confides to the *Duce* that he still exercises his "muscle" daily, and that the woman he "rode" last night is completely worn out, poor thing.

Up to 1934 it is a political correspondence in which D'Annunzio vehemently and sometimes hectoringly calls for the long-promised law protecting the rights of seamen; this was made difficult for Mussolini by the fact that he had also to take account of the interests of the big

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shipowners (such as Cosulich). Later there follows a string of requests. D'Annunzio's son must be made a Deputy; the Dutch lady who appears to have a valid claim to his Lake Garda property must be dealt with; the most famous of his mistresses, Eleonora Duse (who had just died in America), must be brought home and given a State funeral. But with all his repeated demands D'Annunzio never loses his sense of his own dignity and importance. He is never servile. And now and then he utters words of noteworthy political advice.

On 11 September 1915, immediately before the "March on Fiume", D'Annunzio writes to Mussolini:

> "My dear Comrade, the die is cast. I'm going ahead. Tomorrow I shall take Fiume by force of arms. May the God of Italy be on our side. I shall rise from a bed of fever, but delay is impossible. Anyway the spirit will overcome the weakness of the flesh. Summarise the article which the *Gazetta del Popolo* is to publish, but print the ending unchanged. Give us full support while the fight is going on. I embrace you. . . . " (Renzo de Felice, the editor of the correspondence and a notable biographer of Mussolini, notes that D'Annunzio did not give Mussolini's *Il Popolo d'Italia* the first offer of his journalism, but merely the right to reprint articles contributed to other papers which he considered more important.)

Mussolini, on his side, utters dire warnings against communism, which D'Annunzio does not take seriously. "We must also be on our guard against Bolshevism," Mussolini writes from Milan on 18 September 1919. "There are 450,000 workers on strike. However, the majority of the workers approve of the Fiume affair."

On 25 September Mussolini advises D'Annunzio to march on Trieste, to declare the monarchy deposed and put himself at the head of a junta—in other words, to stage a republican revolution. As we know, this is not what Mussolini himself did. He seized power when the King refused to countersign the discredited government's emergency decrees—that is to say, under the monarch's personal protection.

But that was yet to be. D'Annunzio, meanwhile, was sending messages of triumph and defiance from Fiume, to be disseminated by Mussolini's press.

> "Let Italy know that my enterprise is irresistibly gaining ground. . . . She must also know that no government, ally or friendly power can withstand my iron resolution. Wilson is going mad—what a nemesis! He is gnashing his brains with 32 teeth! Press boldly on!" (6 October 1920)

When the "great adventure" was ended, Mussolini—addressing D'Annunzio as *"mio commendatore"*, kept the memory glowingly alive:

> "Peerless warrior, great poet, animator of the new Italian generation. . . . " (17 August 1922)

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h h **Hamish Hamilton**

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D'Annunzio had no confidence in the success of the Fascist march on Rome and little wish for it to succeed. He had many contacts at that time with left-wing circles, and he saw Mussolini as the tool of the "agrarian enslavers." He wrote to friends, "I cannot abandon the common man." To Mussolini he wrote, "The Italy of today does not love me or believe in me." He even wrote sardonically after Mussolini was in power, "Nowadays the young grow old fast, while still singing *Giovinezza* [Youth]."

He gives vent to his frustration and bitterness in a letter dated 16 December 1922, addressed to "dear comrade Mussolini."

> "The best of myself, which I offered to my country, has been falsified, defamed and trampled underfoot. Protestations of love and trust do not deceive me. Exile is the penalty of my long and wholehearted devotion. I know it well. I accept my fate and am equal to it."

During 1922 D'Annunzio was writing the Duce letters of "healthy reproach" in line with "my customary bold frankness." And when the latter protested, saying that D'Annunzio was now regarded in France as an opponent of the Fascist régime, he replied as follows:

> "Your telegram has a strange tone which may be fundamentally 'Fascist' but is quite foreign to my own inner nature. You also fail to perceive the extent to which my insights have become more penetrating, and the heights which my spiritual freedom has attained.... Did not all that is best in the so-called 'Fascist' movement spring from my spirit? Was not the present national revival already—and now alas—predicted by me forty years ago?"

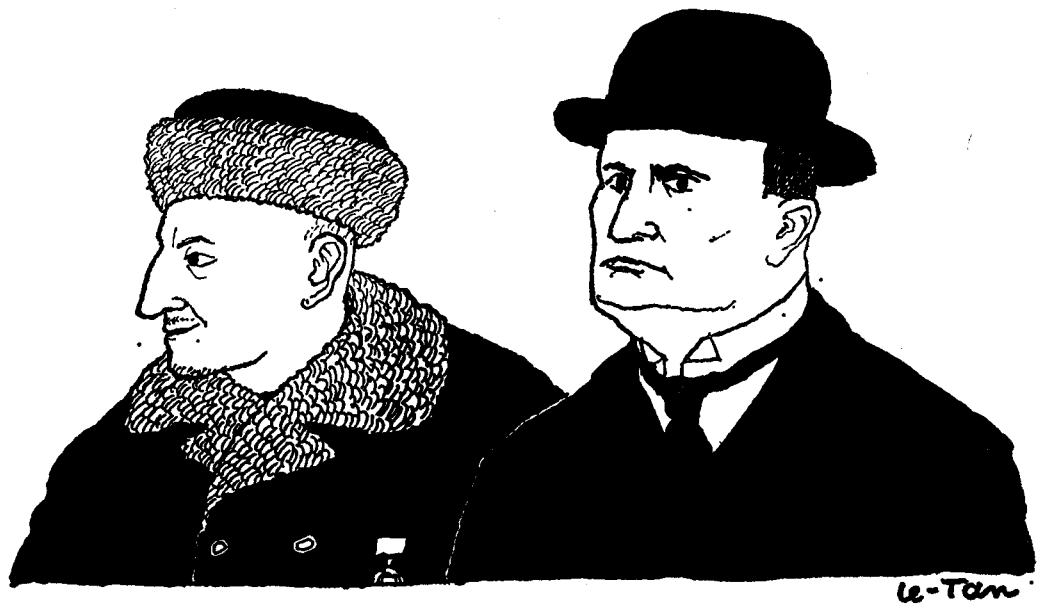
The difficulties surrounding the "seamen's pact", signed both by the *Duce* and the *Commendatore*, were still unresolved. D'Annunzio expostulates, "You know that I wear two invisible crowns, one of laurels and the other of thorns," and when Mussolini replies that he hopes to be able to settle the matter, he retorts, "Do not send me any more telegrams saying, 'I hope to overcome the last obstacles.' In my next book you will find an eloquent passage headed, 'Against Hope'...."

A particularly short message from D'Annunzio, dated 20 August 1923, reads, "Oh, good Laocoön, throttle the snakes," and is signed "The winged adventurer of 21 August 1918."

IN 1924 the King created D'Annunzio Duke of Monte Nevoso. Mussolini had written to him, "The matter is settled, if you wish it," to which D'Annunzio replied in deep displeasure:

> "My name is a lofty title in itself for our contemporaries and their successors. I cannot and should not *wish* for anything. It is the overwhelming duty of the government and the nation finally to acknowledge me, irrespective of my wishes and my disdain. Let it do so. Let it acknowledge the great and many-sided part I played in the 'Holy War', and how by my lonely and uniquely heroic efforts I preserved the ancient frontiers of wounded Italy. Let it acknowledge my Adriatic campaign and creation. That is the nation's duty. It matters nothing to me whether it is performed."

In March 1924, D'Annunzio was up in arms over the persecution of the writer Miguel de Unamuno by the Spanish dictator, Primo de Rivera. He expected Mussolini to share his indignation and do something about it. When



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the telegram of protest which he had addressed to Paris was stopped by the Italian postal authorities he wrote:

> "I know the Spanish political world, I know the King, I know Rivera. I know a great many things. The Bourbon nose is now grotesquely twitching like a rabbit's nose 'full of butter' as Giovanni Villani said of the Flemings. If the Directorate continues to persecute Miguel Unamuno, and goes so far as to bring him to trial and sentence him, I shall sharpen Don Quixote's lance. You should be at one with me in outrage and protest. A few years ago you would have stood at my side, as your bold paper *L'intrepido* put it."

In April 1924, D'Annunzio, abandoning all hope of a settlement of the seaman problem, wrote furiously:

> "We must now part company for good. I have been led on from disappointment to disappointment, from betrayal to betrayal, from hypocrisy to hypocrisy. The signing of the sea-pact was simply a sham, it was never implemented. And this ends it. You must stay on your side and I will stay on mine. As you know—the whole world knows it—in my heart and brain I have every kind of courage. You promised me a truce. You promised it to my art, which is beautiful and eternal as a river, a lake, an Italian landscape. And now you force me to make war. May the responsibility be on your head, and the bloodshed. We embraced by an open grave. We take leave of one another amid the ghoulish laughter of skulls."

But this was merely a flourish, not a separation. Before long, confidence between them was so far restored that Mussolini, suffering from the repercussions of the murder of the socialist Matteoti (and he had authorised it), could write:

> "Two months ago they flung a corpse between my legs, so heavy that it nearly knocked me off my balance. How I envy your solitude, peopled with splendid memories and enclosed in the diligent rhythm of your great work. . . . If you can spare two minutes, write to me, *but not about politics*." (Mussolini underlined the last words.)

D'Annunzio's works were on the Index, and the Church made difficulties when it learned that a new play of his was about to be produced. A Brescia newspaper which was to have printed his letter of protest was seized, and he wrote to the *Duce:*

> "I expressed my opinion of their shameful persecution in a few lines penned with the lofty elegance that no one in the world except myself can command. The paper was brutally confiscated, and this is said to have been done at your instigation. I demand a full explanation so that I may know whether we are comrades or enemies."

"Comrades," Mussolini soothingly replied. It was all a misunderstanding, a case of excess of zeal on the part of an underling "under pressure from the bishops."

A particularly interesting letter is the one dated 9 October 1933, in which D'Annunzio warns Mussolini against Adolf Hitler, the "marrano"[1] with his sick blotchy face, paintbrush flourished like the bladder of a sinister Pagliaccio, and the lock of hair straggling down to the top of his Nazi-nose. "That's enough. You know what I mean. In blunt, Caesarian terms, France must not disarm and Italy must not disarm. . . ." Mussolini replies non-committally: "I have thought about the subject of your letter, and it would be worthwhile to discuss it thoroughly in the peaceful solitude of your Vittoriale."

D'Annunzio, writing in French, composed an appeal to the French people in the name of their common hatred of "the abominable England of Jonathan Swift." (Why Swift particularly?) "This appeal," he reported, "is 212 pages long, and you who know the language will find in it some of the finest pages of French prose ever penned."

Nothing more of significance happened during the two-and-a-half years remaining to him. The fact is that since 1924 he had withdrawn from active politics. If he could not be the Leader of Destiny, he could at least be revered as the great trail-blazer and artist. His letters are all written in a grandiose-ornate style as "classical" as the Vittorio Emanuele monument in Rome. The only human note that emerges is contained in the passing references to his physical state of advancing age and infirmity.

The publication of this correspondence will do nothing to enhance D'Annunzio's reputation. On the contrary, it makes it more difficult to render him such honour as he deserves for his real and considerable contribution to literature. He was not the stuff of which dictators are made, because as the Hero and as the Bard he remained a dilettante to whom politics was never anything more than an attitude, a role to be played among others. It was never, as it was to Mussolini, the only conceivable way of life. D'Annunzio would probably have been incapable of having his political opponents murdered. However much he might hold forth about Power, Fame and Imperial Grandeur, literary creation was to him always the nobler task. Even before the turn of the century, when D'Annunzio crossed the floor of the Italian Chamber from the Right to the Left, a Frenchman had called him *le deputé de la beauté*. His kind of aesthetics had many points of contact with Fascism. And yet—from the *fin de siècle*, of which D'Annunzio was an important part, certain notable impulses are still active in European culture; from fascism, none.

[1] A "Marrano" in Spain was a baptised Jew; but it may also—in Italian—simply mean a scoundrel.

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The Black Dog & King of the Fishes

By John Holloway

THERE IS A MAJOR fault, mile-wide, which runs through what might be termed our cultural geology. On one side of it are those who care about what is emergent and *avant-garde* in the contemporary world. They make the effort to remain abreast of the age, and probably they will not have overmuch time for Miss Briggs' *Dictionary*[1] or anything like it. What can things reprinted from Victorian worthies like Mrs. Bray, Halliwell-Phillipps, W. Carew Hazlitt, Joseph Jacobs, Andrew Lang and the rest, or "Mossy-coat" collected orally from a Lancashire gipsy in 1915, or a tale recorded by the indefatigable Hamish Hamilton from a Perthshire schoolboy, have to do with the Here and Now? On the other side, there is the feeling that as much as possible of a quaintly fascinating bygone world had better be got down, before the last septuagenarian is laid out.

We forget, at our peril, that "abreast of the age" is itself a Victorian idea which introduces a Victorian simplification. The folk-tale in England seems to go with Matthew Arnold's "smock-frock'd boors", because of how our whole popular culture was driven, as nowhere else, to languish or sometimes to flourish underground. But the very fact that tales like "The Blacksmith from Ireland" or "The Flight of Birds" or "Habie's Whistle" (not to mention better-known examples) have a vast international distribution, suggests that something altogether more meaningful than bygone quaintness is at issue. To literary works, Johnson said, "no other test can be applied than length of duration and continuance of esteem"; they "must be estimated by their proportion to the general and collective ability of man." If that is so, the existence of a corpus of what might be called planetary folk-tales makes one thing clear. It is, that to write off the *genre* as having nothing to say to the parish of the contemporary is a monstrous piece of cit's effrontery.

If what anthropology can report, in the matter of primitive mentality and primitive society, powerfully illuminates our own mentality and society, then the folk-tale ought to do the same: its point of origin is the same. But what the *Dictionary of British Folk-Tales* makes possible, more or less for the first time with English and Scottish material, is a process of reflection on the whole structure of consciousness which a major folk-tale corpus comes from, and therefore sustains. In some respects, that structure of consciousness may be remote from our own. In one at least, it is closer than the nineteenth-century structure: and closer, therefore, than the major tradition of literary English fiction.

That major tradition was once delineated, in a now celebrated phrase, as "a vital capacity for experience, a kind of reverent openness before life, and a marked moral intensity." The reverent openness operated within limits: spacious limits no doubt, but there was much that they inconspicuously excluded. Those limits were themselves part of an ambitious nineteenth-century construct: a vaunting work of the imagination which (as is always the case with such things) those who believed, believed as self-evident. That construct, in Jane Austen or George Eliot or James, or again in Trollope or Bennett, was a construct of more than moral intensity and reverent openness (of whatever degree). It assumed a distinctively post-picaresque world of communal integration (George Eliot's "mutual web"), over-riding causality, and consciousness operating on a basis of rational continuity. For a long time, I suppose, everyone found it convincing, and everyone still finds it fascinating. Only two Victorian authors seem to start from some other first position: Emily Brontë and Hardy. The affinity they both have with the folk-tale is obvious. Today, one is driven into a position of dubiety about that ambitious construct.

[1] *A Dictionary of British Folk-Tales*. Edited by KATHARINE M. BRIGGS. Routledge. Part A: Folk Tales, two vols., £10 the set. Part B: Folk Legends, two vols., £16 the set.

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Certainly, there seems little enough that is abreast of the age, in writing like the Great Victorians over again.

KATHARINE BRIGGS' "The Old Smith", which is cognate with "The Blacksmith from Ireland", has a passage which runs like this:

> . . . as before, he could not staunch the blood, and when he threw the head into the boiling water, it was almost boiled to rags. Someone knocked at the door, and the smith in terror said, "No one must come in here." "Not the barefoot boy?" was the reply. Then the smith opened the door, and the boy came straight in up to the lord's body and staunched the blood. He stirred the pot with a golden spoon, and with great difficulty restored the head to its proper shape. He put it back on the lord's body, and the lord sat up, quite healed. He gave them two sacks of gold, and this time the smith was ready to give it all to the boy.
>
> But the boy said, "I only want shoes." When he had his shoes they went on to a great lord's house, who had a wizard whom no one could beat.

Continuity, causality, social web have disappeared. This is counter-causality and a world of the inevitable but absurd. And I find a surrealist realism, a visionary insight into the irrationality of the live, and a juxtaposition of the wild and tame, which from one point of view are all astonishingly true to the quality of experience at its most decisively immediate.

In "The King of the Black Art" there is something that goes further. Manageably brief quotation perhaps just brings it out:

> . . . They came closer and closer, until they were almost on him, then he leapt into the air, and turned into a swallow. The otters turned into hawks, and pursued him. The swallow saw a lady sitting in a garden, flew to her, and turned into a ring on her finger. The hawks swept round her and flew away. Then the ring spoke. It said, "Lady, in a few minutes three labourers will come here, and offer to build up your dyke. When they have done it, they will ask for the ring from your finger as payment. But say to them that you would rather throw it into that bonfire, and throw it as you speak." The lady said she would do as he told her, and in a few minutes the three labourers arrived. They built up the walls as if by magic, and when she offered them money, they asked for the ring, but she threw it into the fire. The labourers turned themselves into three blacksmiths, and began to blow up the fire, but the ring hopped out on the other side into a pile of corn, and turned itself into a grain in the pile. The magicians turned into three cocks, and began to eat the corn, but the boy turned into a fox, and snapped off the three cocks' heads as quick as thought. So the King of the Black Art was defeated.

In this passage, causal continuity is replaced by another integration, a kind of logic of repartee, a drama of events structured as question and answer not cause and effect. What is being done is within hailing distance of Ivy Compton-Burnett. Once again, what at a glance may be taken for childish fantasy can equally well be seen as a sophisticated (though spontaneous) technique: the storyteller's illuminating re-array of reality.

MISS BRIGGS scrupulously gives the tale-types and motifs, for each of her examples, from Aarne, Stith Thompson and the rest. I have long suspected that the conventional indices, essential no doubt if you want to know whether or not some Scottish tale has an analogue in Brazil, actually conceal the power and meaningfulness of the tales. Maybe "The Red Etin" and "The King of England" are both type 303, *the Twins or Blood Brothers*. In the first tale though, the essential point seems to lie in the heroes' struggle with a monstrous animal. In the second, it lies in a hero's struggle with his wife and his father-in-law. I agree that there is a point of view from which this is more or less the same thing; but it takes more than the type-index to tell us that.

The symbolism of "The King of England", dream-like in its intensity and also in its rapid substitutions, says plainly enough that love is a miraculous battle with re-birth as its climax; and that for parent and child alike the coming of physical maturity is release from the "enchantment" of childhood and the arrival of a new world. Type- and motif-classification can conceal this more than throw it into relief. Type 425A, *the Monster (Animal) as Bridegroom*, sounds much like type 955, *the Robber Bridegroom*. The former produces "The Red Bull of Norroway", "The Glass Mountain" and several more tales of the same kind; the latter, "Mr Fox." But in essence the two seem diametrically opposed. "Now you have got to choose which way it is to be: I must take the shape of a bull either by day or by night . . . how will you have it?"

The girl in "The Glass Mountain" knew when a bull for a husband could do no harm. "You shall be a bull by day, and a man by night", was her answer. Another tale of the same type, "Three Feathers", brings out how a woman has the best bargain when she chooses, or creates, the kind of mate who, whatever freakish thing he is like by day and to the world, at night and to her is a marvel of gentleness and camaraderie. What "The Small-Tooth Dog" contributes to the complex is how sharp, how clear, the antithesis is. The husband has two names: "Great, foul, Small-Tooth Dog" is one, and "Sweet-as-a-Honeycomb" is the other. If we cannot see from that, what way it is that a bull lets a girl down at night, we had better give up reading, whether folk-tales or anything else, altogether.

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Mr Fox is not just a robber bridegroom. He is also a monster, but a monster of smooth-faced sexual sadism and destructiveness. The two antithetical types recur in literary fiction: Heathcliff a little like the Red Bull or the Small-Tooth Dog, Grancourt in *Daniel Deronda* or Osmond in *Portrait of a Lady* taking after Mr Fox. For all the elaboration or subtlety of these literary versions, the reality of the case is sometimes neither elaborate nor subtle in fact. Then, these folk-tales speak the truth about it with astonishing abrupt clarity and assurance of comprehension.

AGAIN TO THE TYPE-INDEX, "The Black Cloak" and "The Black Dog of the Wild Forest" may both be No. 313: *the Girl as Helper in the Hero's Flight.* The second of these has something else besides. There are two girls. What the second of them depicts is how a woman (princess or not) can be ruthless and murderous when it comes to getting or losing a man. From all these tales, and others, I infer that the "fairy tale", as the *Dictionary* has to call them, though misleadingly, could have been a potent factor in sex-education, at least in those areas where young people cannot easily or safely be autodidacts. Not, I think, that the mythology of the folk-tale should be seen as in the first place educative in function. Probably it is much more appropriate to see the tales from a Malinowskian standpoint, and think of them as material for communal acts of re-listening: occasions when the group re-asserts its unity by sharing the tensions and laughter of a fiction that plays about knowledge familiar to all.

One of the finest of all the tales is a gipsy story called "The King of the Herrings." Maybe the type of this is indeed *the Bird, the Horse, and the Princess;* or maybe, as Miss Briggs intimates, it is *the Grateful Animals* instead. What makes it a splendid tale is something else. Jack and his little talking horse are on their travels:

> ... away they go over the hill. "Jack, touch nothing that thou seest, even though it be the finest thing thine eyes have ever beheld." And lo! the wind blew a feather into his mouth. Twice or thrice did he spit it out. Back came the feather again. He thought it a pretty feather, and put it in his pocket.

I know that feather.

When they come to the great house, Jack uses his feather to work magic tricks. One knows about that too. Then it is stolen by the lord's crafty servant. Then, that same crafty servant brings out the key turn of thought that gives the whole tale its tension and dynamic:

> Master, I have it: the man who brought the feather here can bring the bird.

From the bird to the lady, from her to the castle, from that to the lady's keys that lie at the bottom

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of the sea, the beautiful game-logic of the tale goes on. It is a game-logic that plots out, in large and sweeping segments, the feel and quality of real life; whether or not, once the stakes are raised against us to the limit, we are lucky enough to number the King of the Herrings among our old friends. All this is no bygone world. It comes right home to the Here and the Now, in schema of dazzling directness and force, undetailed and featureless because they deal not in accidents but in essence.

In these tales, the nineteenth-century fictions of environment, continuity and causality find little or no place. Instead, realism assumes another perspective, of which the nodal points are things like infringement of the tabu; finding that everything is staked on one irrational test; or rising by wit, resourcefulness or sheer magic to victory in a supreme moment. Then, a world structured by such resolutions as these is filled out through a handling of men's sexual lives, or indeed the whole of their kinship and passional lives, which has a matchless if richly *encoded* veracity, and a force and wit of symbolism which make this tale-corpus, viewed collectively, into our great Expressionist novel. "There was once an old woman who lived in a vinegar bottle." *Who does not?*

I HAVE MENTIONED WIT. Much of it is lost for ever, permanently extruded from the national consciousness by the operation of gent's prose from Andrew Lang, Joseph Jacobs, or others far worse than them. Perhaps the finest thing about the present collection is that in many cases, thanks to the tape-recorder, we now have the real thing. Now, we can see these tales have crackled with just the wit, sense of language, and feel for style that still show as clear as day when plain men talk together at their ease. The folk-tale Cordelia ("Cap o' Rushes") tells her father that she loves him "as the meat loves salt." In the end, she brings it home with an unseasoned meal from which father jumps up in incredulous disgust. The best Russellian truth-paradox known to me comes from *The Hundred Merry Tales*: the rich man dies; his will tells the executor to give a penny to everyone who comes forward and tells a truth; and a man comes who says, "thou shalt give me ne'er a penny." "Don Nippery Septo" (this is *domine praeceptor*), the "Professor of Signs" stories that Rabelais filched for Panurge, all the variations on the Polyphemus "I am blinded by No-man" theme, and Gobborn Seer, the carpenter whose tool called "Crooked and Straight" is enough to get the king's son tipped head first into the chest and locked up there, all testify to this

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kind of wit, this downright but versatile linguistic liveliness. Occasionally, in the new, tape-recorded versions, there is sustained brilliance of narration. By any valid critical standard, Andra Stewart's "King of the Liars" or Jeannie Robertson's "Silly Jack and the Factor" are masterpieces of the English short story.

"Daft Jack" goes along with Pal Hall, 'Appy Boswell the gipsy, Tom Tram—and Buchanan and Skelton the poet: all of them characters (whether once real or not is no matter) around whom legends have gathered. These legendary figures thicken up reality. The world seems a more populous and also more meaningful place to those who have been able to think of certain attitudes to life, certain responses, incarnated within the inexhaustible vitality of the local folk hero. Universities are great places for primitive customs to survive in, and I know of characters in both Oxford and Cambridge who have accreted legends to themselves until they have begun to acquire something of a half-mythical status themselves. In other ways too, this great body of national tales must have left those for whom it was first created with a fuller and more meaningful world. The very barnyard fowl, nearer to humans than we denizens of megalopolis can see them, know jealousy, folly, and affectionate consideration within the family. Again, chance is not explained away by science as with us; but far more readily, and far more comprehensibly indeed, by reference to the ferocious Black Dogs (or "bargests"), or to witches (who can dry up the cows' milk faster than any vitamin deficiency), or to the Little Folk who will do many kindly things —unless you thank them. In the absence of bargests, witches and the Little Folk, the Devil himself may be drawn on to attenuate the element of chance in the world; and can act as piper when a whole Stone Circle breaks into a dance, and appear dressed as a clergyman to challenge a blasphemous champion wrestler, or as a lame moor-man offering his bread and cheese to the passer-by an incautious remark has exposed.

Added to all these are the local legends (including the place-name myths). Through them everyone, in every corner of the country, lived in a featured, an *explained* landscape. Every hill, rock, bridge, tree or house was significated by the tales about it, stretching back into an intimately rendered and humanised past. There are several hundred of these in the *Dictionary*. Perhaps, across Britain as a whole, there are a thousand for each one printed here. To move out of this variegated, hilarious, frightening, infinitely alive world into that of today's numerate-and-literate, was certainly not to quit childhood for adulthood and being abreast of the age. In some respects, doubtless, it was to quit falsehood for truth. But what is

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avant-garde in our own time shows that truth itself may be given an overly Victorian, overly Prince Consort ring; whereas in these four magnificent volumes it has a New Look, and sometimes it pounces on us as suddenly, and as ferociously, as the Black Dog itself.

Conrad, Between Fact & Fiction

By Eloise Knapp Hay

JOSEPH CONRAD'S REMARK in *A Personal Record,* that the world rests upon "a few simple ideas"—"notably, among others, on the idea of Fidelity"—is surprisingly illustrated in Norman Sherry's new book[1], a companion piece to his earlier book on the source material Conrad used in writing about his "Eastern world." Fidelity for Conrad, we see clearly, meant fidelity to historical records in addition to the other fidelities he stressed increasingly: to "the visible universe" (in *The Nigger of the "Narcissus"*); to "the truth of my own sensations"; and to the personal traditions connected with his family, his ships, and his nationalities, as he describes them in his memoirs.

Sherry demonstrates in both of his books (but especially in the second) how attentive Conrad was to rendering truthfully the historical and factual details available for virtually all of his characters, places, and situations. In this light, Ford Madox Ford's book, *A Personal Remembrance,* seems less extravagant in the passage where he chafes at Conrad's insistence upon a complete genealogy for every character they created in collaboration or that Conrad, dictating to Ford, created alone.

While Conrad could draw genealogies and other facts he needed from his own world-ranging experience, he could speak about fidelity to his own impressions, but when these narrowed down to impressions chiefly of domestic life in England, he resorted to books and to the experiences of friends—especially the revolutionary but aristocratic Socialist R. B. Cunninghame Graham—for most of his factual material.

Sherry has done an enormous amount of research, following clues in Conrad's fiction, prefaces and letters, or ransacking check lists, like Bernard Naylor's bibliography of South American travellers' accounts, and the newspapers and magazines Conrad may have read. In addition, he has speculated on circumstances in Conrad's circle of friends and relatives that might have provided characters and situations. For example, he shows that the portrait of "Don Carlos" Gould in *Nostromo* is based partly (and more perhaps than Sherry recognises) on "Don Roberto" Cunninghame Graham. Winnie Verloc's domestic circle in *The Secret Agent,* as some of us must have thought but without seeing Sherry's evidence, seems based to a degree on Conrad's own family circle.

Sherry will probably be blamed for ignoring Conrad's objection to allowing source-hunters into his preserve. He was extremely irritated with Richard Curle for proposing to identify the port by which Marlow, in *Youth,* touched the East for the first time. He wrote to Curle in 1922:

> It is a strange fate that everything that I have of set artistic purpose laboured to leave indefinite, suggestive, in the penumbra of initial inspiration, should have that light turned on to it and its insignificance (as compared with . . . the ampleness of my conceptions) exposed for any fool to comment on. . . . Explicitness, my dear fellow, is fatal to the glamour of all artistic work, robbing it of all suggestiveness, destroying all illusion. . . . Yet nothing is more clear than the utter insignificance of explicit statement and also its power to call attention away from things that matter in the region of art.

But Sherry will be able to answer Conrad's charge with words from his own pen, written also to Curle and a year later. In a letter (17 July 1923), he advises Curle that the way to write about "authors and their material" is to observe "how they transform it from particular to general and appeal to universal emotions by the temperamental handling of personal experience." For Conrad this "material" included reading to an extraordinary degree.

Unfortunately, Sherry deals with only seven stories and novels out of twenty-five or so that Conrad set in the Western world, thus obscuring the vital distinction Conrad perpetually made between "the East" and "the West." The East in his fiction is paradoxically passive and virile, appealing and deadly, redemptive and degenerate. The West, just as paradoxically, is

[1] *Conrad's Western World.* By NORMAN SHERRY. Cambridge University Press, £4.60. $14.50,

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activistic and effete, idealistic and fanatical, messianic and egocentripetal. He drew a harder line between East and West, at the western boundaries of the Indian Ocean and Russia, when writing his essays.

Leaving out Conrad's France as Sherry does, he must avoid the fascinating questions of what the Western World meant in Conrad's conception of his own identity, and where he would have stood today in deciding whether or not England is a part of Europe. In two key passages of *A Personal Record*, he writes passionately of the parts that England and Europe have played in his life, but he keeps the two quite separate. He did not consciously choose to write in English, he says:

> The truth of the matter is that my faculty to write in English is as natural as any other aptitude with which I might have been born. I have a strange and overpowering feeling that it had always been an inherent part of myself.

Yet he does not mention England among the nations of Europe whom he sees as forming an invisible barrier against "Slavonism." Misspelling this word as if to suggest its cognate in the French "*esclave*", he adds a further note on the misunderstanding of his cultural "mentality":

> Nothing is more foreign than what in the literary world is called Sclavonism to the Polish temperament with its tradition of self-government, its chivalrous view of moral restraints and an exaggerated respect for individual rights: not to mention the important fact that the whole Polish mentality, Western in complexion, had received its training from Italy and France and, historically, had always remained, even in religious matters, in sympathy with the most liberal currents of European thought.

TAKING CONRAD'S MAP, one can understand Sherry's exclusion of *Under Western Eyes* from his book, though the title alone and the setting of the novel in Geneva should warrant his attention. It seems incomprehensible, however, that he should exclude Conrad's novels and stories about France, where more of his fiction is set than in any other single locale, including England. Sherry also omits much of the fiction set in England—"Amy Foster" and *Chance*, for instance. He means to expand his book in time, presumably, but meanwhile the "Western" material he has gathered might better have made three solid articles, focussed on *Heart of Darkness*, *Nostromo*, and *The Secret Agent*.

But to turn from the bad news to the good, Sherry deals fairly thoroughly with the seven works he treats and has made some exciting discoveries. They range from small points, such as that (behind *Heart of Darkness*) there really was a yacht named the "Nellie" on which Conrad sailed, and there really were four privileged

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listeners like those to whom Marlow tells most of that tale. The larger discoveries in Sherry's range include a new source for Kurtz, whom Sherry sees in the Belgian commercial agent A. E. C. Hodister. Conrad plainly followed, in the *Mouvement Géographique* newspaper, Hodister's extraordinary exploits and successes in obtaining ivory for two years, from Conrad's own time in the Congo till Hodister's ghastly death at the hands of cannibals in 1892.

One could argue that Sherry is at times too narrowly bound by his sources to see the larger sources (and the larger implications) of Conrad's imaginative rendering. Occasionally Sherry is so absorbed in his *Quellenforschung* that he forgets the novelist's unimpeachable authority in his different sphere. For example, he chides Conrad for arousing less compassion in his readers than they would have felt if they had read his sources: "This sympathy," he writes, "is denied Stevie [in *The Secret Agent*] by the fact that he is quite dead . . . ", whereas in the real bombing the young man was still alive. Similar objections are raised against Conrad's treatment of convicts in "An Anarchist" and of Michaelis in *The Secret Agent*, where Sherry sees the Irish anarchist Michael Davitt as a more important source than Bakunin (an arguable point). He insists, too, on a narrowly autobiographical basis for Marlow's relationship with the Belgian commercial mentality, though Conrad deliberately avoids naming it Belgian in the story. Readers generally now observe more forcefully Marlow's words that "all Europe went into the making of Kurtz" and read his words about British imperialism (where he, if not Conrad, keeps it separate from Europe's) as proof that Conrad keeps a sizeable ironic distance between Marlow's "partnership" with Kurtz and his own. (Forgetting that Kurtz has "set up" his own white superiority as a godhead to which he has offered—and eaten—human sacrifices, Marlow defends British imperialism because it has an "idea at the back of it . . . something you can set up, and bow down before, and offer a sacrifice to.") Then, too, although Conrad was "illuminated" by his Congo journey, Marlow complains because he was not. And Marlow reveals his hard-earned knowledge to four intimate friends while lying about it to everyone else, whereas Conrad—at the height of the Boer War—published it for all to read in a Conservative magazine.

SHERRY'S RELUCTANCE to look beyond the ranks of the Belgian traders and the American Henry Stanley (previously known to be an important model for Kurtz) shows that more work can be done here. Attention should be paid in particular to Conrad's friendship with Cunninghame Graham, who read Conrad's anti-imperialistic "An Outpost of Progress" in 1897 (the year before *Heart of Darkness*) and began their long friendship on the strength of it. Cunninghame Graham's letters at this time show far more concern with Kipling, Rhodes, and Jameson, and the very Kurtzian commercial agent A. G. Spilsbury (an Englishman) than with any of the Belgians.

When Sherry comes to *Nostromo*, he again adds greatly to our sense of Conrad's fidelity to fact, while of course not exhausting all the possible sources that he used. I was hoping for some identification of the American behind Holroyd, whose qualities might be found in the Congressional statements of the first Henry Cabot Lodge (the alphabet for "Holroyd" is in his name anyway) on the U.S.A.'s God-given trusts in the hemisphere. But Sherry is very good on the reading Conrad did in order to compress the whole of South America imaginatively into his composite Costaguana.

Though we are tempted to think that Conrad would never have undertaken to deal with imperialism and revolution in South America without Cunninghame Graham's extensive personal experience there and the books he was able to recommend, we should not forget that Conrad was already anti-imperialist and anti-revolutionary in his earliest Malayan novels and in *The Nigger of the "Narcissus"*, before meeting Cunninghame Graham—or Ford Madox Ford.

Sherry is right to stress Ford's midwifery during the gestation and delivery of "The Informer" and *The Secret Agent*. Sherry shows how closely "The Informer" follows certain details of the William Michael Rossetti family's flirtations with London's international set of anarchists in the 1890s. Rossetti's two daughters, Olive and Helen, published an anarchist newspaper from their nursery—advocating abortion, among other things. They also wrote a novel, *A Girl Among the Anarchists*, under the pseudonym of Isabel Meredith, whose first name (Sherry might have noted) Conrad once used in a manuscript for the lady patroness of anarchists in *The Secret Agent*. As Rossetti's nephew, Ford was plainly an important source for the central and tangential absurdities of Conrad's fictional revolutionaries, even in *Under Western Eyes*.

Sherry is splendid on the sources Conrad used in *The Secret Agent* for his Home Secretary, Sir Ethelred (based on Sir William Harcourt), Scotland Yard's Assistant Commissioner (based on Sir Howard Vincent as well as Sir Robert Anderson) and Chief Inspector Heat (based on an Inspector Melville but also on Vincent and Anderson). For the secret agent himself, however, Sherry's sleuthing leads to speculation that far outstrips the evidence and even runs contrary to it. If Sherry is right, Conrad based this odious

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Adolf Verloc partly on a friend of twenty years, on whom he said he had "pinned [his] faith", whose only fault was that in desperation he had dunned Conrad for a long outstanding debt. Devoting a whole chapter to this friend (Adolf Krieger), Sherry obscures the clear evidence he has given earlier for the full adequacy of H. B. Samuels—brother-in-law of the "under-developed" Martial Bourdin whose bomb in fact caused the Observatory outrage—as the single important source for Verloc.

In a similar vein, while one is grateful to Sherry for revealing the hints for Winnie Verloc's and her mother's situations in the self-portrait of Conrad's wife Jessie (which would of course make Conrad himself appear in both Verloc and Stevie, the feeble-minded victim—and not unreasonably), one may not agree that Conrad conceived Winnie's *mariage de convenance* for her poor brother as quite the betrayal that Sherry believes it. Writing about the novel after it was finished, Conrad at different times saw Winnie and her mother each as "the hero" of the novel, and also mocked his own miserable self at the time as either feeble-minded or duplicitous.

ALTHOUGH FORD APPEARS as an inspiration behind *The Secret Agent*, Sherry's main discovery of a pamphlet likely to have been its main published source points more to Cunninghame Graham's midwifery than to Ford's. As one of Conrad's early readers guessed, an unidentified pamphlet (and probably this one) contained hints for almost every character and situation he developed in the novel. Its author, David J. Nicoll, was closely associated with Cunninghame Graham in his most revolutionary phase, when they represented the Socialist League and addressed all who would listen to them on platforms shared by Kropotkin and William Morris. Nicoll's pamphlet is written from inside knowledge of the whole anarchist circle and tells in a tone which is chivalrous, anti-terroristic, and somehow aristocratic for all its anarchistic sympathies, of how poor Martial Bourdin became Samuels' "tool" in perpetrating the outrage, so that reactionary forces inside England and abroad would see the danger in England's hospitality to foreign revolutionaries. Nicoll had earlier written another socialist pamphlet, revealing the difference between Henry Stanley's actual exploits in Africa and those he toned down when writing *In Darkest Africa*. It seems likely that Nicoll's friend Cunninghame Graham put that pamphlet, as well as "The Greenwich Observatory Mystery", at Conrad's disposal. At any rate, Conrad's knowledge of early Marxism and revolutionary anarchism was deeper than Sherry suggests.

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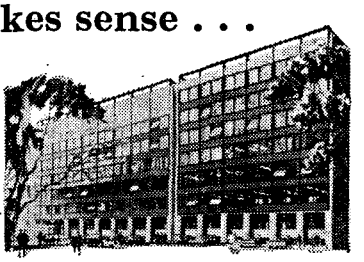

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He is exceedingly cautious about the larger conclusions we may reach concerning Conrad's factual sources. One might be that Conrad's turn to books after his voyaging years was a return, a response to narrowing horizons already conditioned in him. When he was about eleven, after his mother's death and his own and his father's release from exile in Russia—while watching his father die of tuberculosis—Conrad recalled that books had come to his rescue. "I don't know what would have become of me if I had not been a reading boy," he wrote in "Poland Revisited."

When he came to transforming his sea memories into fiction, he often allowed his personal experiences to coalesce imaginatively with episodes about which he had read. Edward Garnett remembered Conrad telling vividly of something that had happened to him during an illness in the Congo, which we discover had really happened to the explorer Mungo Park. In Sherry's concluding chapter, he perceptively notes that Conrad's statement—"I never could invent a really effective lie"—points to a little noticed feature of Conrad's aesthetics. For him "invention" meant the opposite almost to what it meant for Alexander Pope, who called it the primary imaginative act in his preface to *The Iliad*. For Conrad as for Coleridge, imagination (so distrusted in the eighteenth century) was the primary act, *but it had to act upon non-invented materials*.

CONRAD'S IMAGINATION inhabited a region bordering that of the "non-fiction novelists" today in Russia and America—Solzhenitsyn, Sinyavsky, Mailer, and Capote, for instance. Three reasons might be found for this reliance on recorded history as the shaping power of the writer's fables, which seems to negate Aristotle's classical argument that "poetry" is superior to history.

The points are obvious but need to be seen together. First, the novel, as more or less pure invention, was running down from exhaustion in Conrad's time. Second, the fundamental myths on which "poets" relied in Aristotle's time for the unity of experience still seemed necessary to Conrad, but the loss of mythic imagination—deepening for three centuries—had reached a point of no return. Like Joyce, of course he worked the mines of Homer and other mythologies. He had been, he said, "steeped in classicism." But both Joyce and Conrad were intent on working the mines of actual events as well, in their Dublin, London and remoter parts of the world. Their ideas of history were not what Aristotle's were, and this will be my third and final point.

Conrad lamented that he had brought so little to England in the way of "cultural luggage" when he was shaping the "fables" of *Nostromo* and *The Secret Agent*. We are ready now, with Sherry's help, to see that he had enough of such "luggage" and that he sought even more avidly for the actualities of current history. For Conrad, Aristotle's and Sidney's "higher truth" no longer resided mainly in myths. If there was any higher truth at all, and Conrad often affirmed that there was, it had to be found in rendering the widest possible "justice to the visible universe." And this justice was often attainable only through personal reflections upon recorded fact.

Warburg & Gombrich

By David Watkin

PROFESSOR E. H. GOMBRICH came to England in 1936 to write commentaries on the plates in Warburg's "picture atlas", entitled *Mnemosyne*, "a large collection of images recapitulating and expounding Warburg's vision of the forces that had determined the evolution of the Western mind." The function of the atlas was identical with that of the Institute Warburg had founded which was, in his own words, "to point to the function of collective memory as a formative force for the emergence of styles by using the civilisation of pagan antiquity as a constant."

It was an extraordinary ambition. It may, of course, seem more so to the English than to the German reader, since enthusiasm for the whole academic paraphernalia of Yearbooks and Cultural Institutes—on which German scholarship thrives—does not well up spontaneously in the average English breast. And there is no more complete or daunting product of that world than *Die Kulturwissenschaftliche Bibliothek Warburg*, of which Professor Gombrich is Director and which was shipped in six hundred boxes from Hamburg to London in 1933. The English may not be very good at founding cultural institutes

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but we are very good in crises of this kind; and the intellectual life of the country has been enriched by the bold step which London University took in 1944 of incorporating the Warburg Institute.

Mnemosyne was to form part of a full edition of Warburg's collected writings initiated after his death in 1929 by his distinguished successor Fritz Saxl and his devoted assistant Gertrud Bing. Gombrich, however, soon came to realise that Warburg had never thrown away a piece of paper in his life and that consequently his "notes should not be published so much as used in a presentation of his ideas." This proposal was not one which appealed to Miss Bing who appears to have been contemplating a work of hagiography rather than of art history. It was therefore agreed that she should publish a biography of Warburg to which Gombrich would add later an intellectual biography. She died in 1964 leaving her ambition largely unrealised. With help from Warburg's son, Max, Gombrich consequently set about providing a biographical background to the presentation of Warburg's ideas which he had written as early as 1946-47 and which includes large sections of Warburg's notes translated into English.

The resultant volume[1] inevitably assumes something of the hushed arcane character of a religious biography produced for a captive audience in a cloister after the death of a particularly revered inmate, prepared collectively and bound by lay-brothers in the monastery press minimally and with deliberate lack of allure. That it offers something more than this, that every page is profoundly suggestive, is due as much to the breadth and grasp of Gombrich's mind as to those of his subject. Indeed the constant interaction of these two great minds to create a rich polyphony of continuities, resonances and paradoxes, constitutes one of the most brilliant and enthralling spectacles that modern art history can afford.

ABY WARBURG was born in Hamburg in 1866 of a Jewish banking family. Gombrich carefully analyses the role in Warburg's intellectual development played by his education at Bonn University which culminated in his dissertation on Botticelli. Gombrich shows how a thesis which began as a conventional stylistic analysis of the fondness of late *quattrocento* artists for ornamental and non-realistic drapery patterns, was subsumed into a deeper questioning of the way in which Botticelli and his patrons imagined antiquity and what ideas were evoked in their minds by their reading of Ovid and his Renaissance imitators. Having presented his thesis in 1891, Warburg moved to Berlin where his attendance at a course of lectures on psychology, preparatory to taking up medicine, was interrupted by a year's military service. There followed an investigation in Florence of Mannerist pageantry and a journey to America in 1895-96 which enabled him to study the tribal ritual of the Indians of New Mexico. This made "paganism" a vital concept for him and was consequently of help to him in his subsequent investigations into the survival of classical myth. A further period of study in the Florentine archives confirmed for him, in support of an argument contained in some posthumous essays of Burckhardt, that

> Contrary to all expectations the records and documents showed indeed that the great Florentine patrons, men who according to the cliché should have favoured the "progressive" artists of the Renaissance, were in fact extraordinarily fond of the products of the "Gothic" North.

Warburg's documentary researches further revealed that the first "pagan" subjects in the work of artists such as Verrocchino, the Pollaiuoli and Botticelli himself were commissioned in connection with "mediaeval" tournaments held as a result of the transference to Florence of chivalrous pageantry.

To reconcile such paradoxes within the concepts of his historical psychology, Warburg left Florence for Hamburg in 1904 to found a library that would act as "*eine kulturhistorische Station* (an observation post for cultural history)." In the clarity and delicacy with which Gombrich traces Warburg's mental processes in this period lies one of the book's chief fascinations. Gombrich shows how Warburg pondered for ten years the problems posed by Lorenzo de' Medici's Florence, gradually shifting his attention to a study of the survival of belief in pagan gods deducible from the astrological imagery of the Renaissance. This led him to an analysis of the sometimes ambiguous relation of Dürer and Luther to the fear of demons and to the mythology of the great conjunction of the planets.

However, by the collapse of the German Empire in 1918 the demonic had caught hold of Warburg's own mental condition, as he had often feared it might. He was consequently confined for several years in asylums, sometimes in closed wards. In 1923, in a curious but apparently successful attempt to convince his doctors of his return to mental health, he delivered to his fellow-patients a lecture on Serpent Ritual based on his experiences among the American Indians

[1] *Aby Warburg, an Intellectual Biography. With a Memoir on the History of the Library by F. Saxl.* By E. H. GOMBRICH. The Warburg Institute, University of London, £6.

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twenty-six years earlier, the notes for which "are couched in an almost private terminology that presents insurmountable obstacles to the translator."

It is not, perhaps, altogether easy to envisage the circumstances in which the delivery of such a lecture to such an audience could be adduced as evidence of fully restored sanity. What is clear is that "he sensed that his own mental illness had given him new insights into these 'primitive' states", *i.e.* Indian rituals.

> The idea [Gombrich concludes], that man's primeval reaction to the universal terror of his existence underlies all human attempts at spiritual orientation is basic to Warburg's later thought.

In other words, he had come close to an understanding of the doctrine of Original Sin. Paganism, moreover, he now saw as a psychological state of surrender to impulses of frenzy and of fear.

DURING WARBURG'S ILLNESS, Saxl had been busy turning what had been "the private library of a lonely scholar into a public research institute" with the financial support of the American branch of the Warburg family. Perhaps inspired by Saxl's own interests, Warburg now turned his attention to Rembrandt and his attitude to classical antiquity. Rembrandt's rejection of the revived Hellenistic *pathos* formulae of contemporary triumphal pageants and Baroque decoration in favour of a more contemplative manner showed (to quote from Gombrich's translation of Warburg's words) that

> It really depends on the subjective make-up of the late-born rather than on the objective character of the classical heritage whether we feel that it arouses us to passionate action or induces the calm of serene wisdom. Every age has the renaissance of antiquity it deserves.

Warburg became interested in using photographic exhibitions to explain his ideas, devising an exhibition of astrological imagery and another in which attention was concentrated on the fate of classical symbolism in the imagery of postage stamps. This new interest led naturally to the grand conception of his "picture atlas" which, by the time of his death, consisted of forty screens crowded with nearly a thousand photographs of all sizes. Gombrich's analyses of the almost infinite allusions and overtones of Warburg's abstruse and unexpected juxtapositions—ranging from Arabic manuscripts to travel posters of the Hamburg-Amerika line—form one of the most stimulating chapters of the entire book.

Many of the broader cultural issues which Professor Gombrich raises in his necessarily esoteric study of Warburg are elaborated in his

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pamphlet, *In Search of Cultural History*[2], delivered at Oxford in 1967 as the Philip Maurice Deneke Lecture and later published in an expanded form. If the intellectual biography of Warburg will be read only by specialists the pamphlet deserves to reach a wider if not, indeed, a popular audience. In it Gombrich argues that "For good or ill the universities have taken over from the home much of the function of transmitting the values of our civilisation." One is tempted to point out, however, that at some point everyone will raise the mask of detachment to ask themselves whether what is now being transmitted is merely the memory of values that once were. Warburg, indeed, over the entrance to his creation caused to be inscribed the word MNHMOΣYNH, "Memory", while Gombrich considers that "The study of culture is largely the study of continuities, and it is this sense of continuity rather than of uncritical acceptance we hope to impart to our students." Perhaps one of the questions of which the books under review will provoke discussion is the extent to which there is a difference between Warburg's "Memory" and Gombrich's "continuities."

IT IS CLEAR THAT Hegel's metaphysical concept of the Spirit of the Age not only made possible the growth of art history in the 19th century but still colours much modern art-historical writing. In proposing that universities replace such studies with "Cultural History", Professor Gombrich outlines an approach at once less narrow than conventional art history and less broad than sociology. And here, as an anti-Hegelian, Warburg may have a role to play, because to him style was and remained a matter of choice, symptomatic of a moral attitude. Consequently he was no believer in the concept of a spirit of the age to which it is futile to offer resistance and would not have sympathised with Nikolaus Pevsner's condemnation of some 20th-century architecture for being "not of its own time." Warburg was, indeed, opposed to modernism in the arts, criticising a modern novel in a letter to a friend with the words: "I don't permit anyone to drag me through an *Inferno* whom I do not also believe capable of leading me across the *Purgatorio* to the *Paradiso*."

One of the more provocative juxtapositions of images in Warburg's "Atlas" consisted of a reproduction of Raphael's "Mass at Bolsena" with a news photograph of the signing of the Concordat with Mussolini. How, one wonders, would Warburg have interpreted modern cultural psychology which permits, at the time of writing, copies of Lord Clark's book, *Civilization*, to be on sale among the Catholic Truth Society pamphlets at Westminster Cathedral?

[2] *In Search of Cultural History*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, University Press, 5s.

Maps of the Waste Land

By Bernard Bergonzi

IN 1956 ELIOT WROTE, apropos of John Livingston Lowes' *Road to Xanadu*, "poetic originality is largely an original way of assembling the most disparate and unlikely material to make a new whole." "Assembling" is not a word one usually applies to writing poetry, but it is very relevant to Eliot's own methods. C. K. Stead has shown how the separate parts of "The Hollow Men" were previously published in different combinations, until Eliot finally shuffled them into the right order. And we have his own account of how "Burnt Norton" was made up of fragments discarded from *Murder in the Cathedral* during the course of production. Eliot's basic method of composition was more traditionally Romantic than is often realised, with a frank reliance on unconscious sources of inspiration to produce brief poetic passages, or perhaps just single lines, of great isolated intensity. The next, and equally arduous, stage in the assembling of a whole poem was akin to the methods of an artist in mosaic or collage. Fragments or phrases not suitable for one poem would be carefully kept, sometimes for years, until they could be used in another. It is this aspect of Eliot's art that is most fascinatingly revealed in the long-lost manuscripts of *The Waste Land*, a poem whose most crucial line is certainly *"These fragments I have shored against my ruins."*

For a long time readers have wistfully assumed that if only those legendary manuscripts would turn up then the worst difficulties might be

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resolved, since Eliot's *ur*-version must have been more lucid and coherent than the final product of Ezra Pound's ruthless editing. That notion, at least, is now dispelled. The first draft of *The Waste Land,* brought back by Eliot from his rest-cure at Lausanne in the autumn of 1921, was, as he once deprecatingly told an interviewer, "just as structureless, only in a more futile way." The original manuscript consisted of several extended sections —in blank verse, quatrains and heroic couplets— plus a number of shorter fragments, that Eliot hoped could be somehow "worked in." If Eliot's original design had a unity it was of a very loose kind, for the work that he brought back from Lausanne was essentially a set of separate poems; even after *The Waste Land* was published in 1922 reviewers tended to refer to it as "poems" rather than "a poem." Mrs Eliot's admirable edition[1] shows clearly the streamlining effect of the editorial cuts, by no means all of which were made by Pound, as Eliot modestly implied. It was a pencil stroke in Eliot's own hand that excised the original opening, a low-pressure chatty passage about Boston low-life, thereby ensuring that the first line was "April is the cruellest month" rather than "First we had a couple of feelers down at Tom's place." Most of the material that was cut out, whether by Eliot himself, or by Pound, deserved to go. But I think Eliot was mistaken when he removed, at Pound's suggestion, the original epigraph from Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*:

> Did he live his life again in every detail of desire, temptation, and surrender during that supreme moment of complete knowledge? He cried out in a whisper at some image, at some vision—he cried out twice, a cry that was no more than a breath—"The horror! the horror!"

If *The Waste Land* had been prefaced with this quotation it might have been evident from the beginning that the poem is, at bottom, an anguished reliving of subjective experience, and not the "impersonal" meditation on cultural decline that so many commentators—whether sympathetic or unsympathetic—have assumed it to be. Conrad's lines point to the real subject of the poem; the word "surrender" had a peculiar significance for Eliot, and Conrad's use of it seems to be echoed later in *The Waste Land*, in "The awful daring of a moment's surrender" (and perhaps in "Tradition and the Individual Talent", where Eliot says of the poet, "what happens is a continual surrender of himself as he is at the moment to something which is more valuable").

There is one other place where Pound's excisions may have been misdirected. Part IV, "Death by Water", was originally much longer. After a very inferior set of opening quatrains, the verse develops into a mostly well-written account of a disastrous voyage by a New England fishing vessel, with deliberate echoes of Tennyson's and Dante's Ulysses. There are striking anticipations of the Quartets of twenty years later:

> *Kingfisher weather, with a light fair breeze,*
> *Full canvas, and the eight sails drawing well.*
> *We beat around the cape and laid our course*
> *From the Dry Salvages to the eastern banks.*
> *A porpoise snored upon the phosphorescent swell,*
> *A triton rang the final warning bell*
> *Astern, and the sea rolled, asleep.*

Later in this section the verse becomes more intense, recalling the quotation from Conrad, and looking back momentarily to the final lines of "Prufrock":

> *One night*
> *On watch, I thought I saw in the fore cross-trees*
> *Three women leaning forward, with white hair*
> *Streaming behind, who sang above the wind*
> *A song that charmed my senses, while I was*
> *Frightened beyond fear, horrified past horror, calm,*
> *(Nothing was real) for, I thought, now, when*
> *I like, I can wake up and end the dream.*
> *—Something which we knew must be a dawn—*
> *A different darkness, flowed above the clouds,*
> *And dead ahead we saw, where sky and sea should meet,*
> *A line, a white line, a long white line,*
> *A wall, a barrier towards which we drove.*

Not all the deleted lines are as good as this. Some cutting, particularly of the sailor's talk, was probably required, but it is a pity that the whole section had to go; the parallel between the New England fishermen and Phlebas the Phoenician was effective, and the Phlebas passage by itself (an adaptation from the closing lines of one of Eliot's French poems of 1918, "Dans le Restaurant") stands rather too abruptly. Eliot, in fact, wanted to delete that too, when the first part of "Death by Water" went, but Pound dissuaded him. Characteristically, though, Eliot hung on to a couple of phrases from the deleted lines, which later turned up in "The Dry Salvages" and "Marina."

On the other hand, Pound's editing greatly improved "The Fire Sermon." This section originally opened with a long set of Popean couplets, which were adroit enough in their way, but which only reiterated points made more tersely elsewhere about the emptiness of fashionable life. As an exercise in the smart neo-classicising of the twenties—there are musical parallels in Stravinsky or Prokofiev—they have a certain curiosity value, but it wasn't really Eliot's kind of thing. Nor, for that matter, were the quatrain poems, like "Sweeney Erect", that he wrote

[1] *The Waste Land: A Facsimile and Transcript of the Original Drafts.* Edited by VALERIE ELIOT. Faber & Faber, £5.

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between 1917 and 1919, largely as a result of reading Gautier under Pound's influence. In the first draft of "The Fire Sermon" the account by Tiresias of the seduction of a bored typist by the "young man carbuncular" was told in a long sequence of such quatrains. Pound's cuts boldly ignored the rhyme scheme, so that the lines ended up as the section of continuous and irregularly rhyming verse that appeared in the published version. One of the minor puzzles in that version is the peculiar syntax of the lines,

> *the evening hour that strives*
> *Homeward, and brings the sailor home from sea,*
> *The typist home at teatime, clears her breakfast, lights*
> *Her stove, and lays out food in tins.*

It now looks as if this elision was the result of inadequate suturing after the editorial cuts. The manuscript read

> *The typist home at teatime, who begins*
> *To clear away her broken breakfast, lights*
> *Her stove, and lays out squalid food in tins. . . .*

Pound's marginal comment on these lines was "verse not interesting enough as verse to warrant so much of it." Certainly the taut and rapid final version is a vast improvement on the laboured quatrains. At first there was a good deal more about the young man, whom Eliot seems to have regarded with immense distaste but with a certain novelistic interest, describing him as a layabout who frequents the Café Royal, and a crude but confident womaniser. If some readers find these lines deplorably snobbish and anti-life, one can only say that the original version was far more so; the young man's departure might have read like this, were it not for a cautious comment by Pound:

> *—Bestows one final patronising kiss,*
> *And gropes his way, finding the stairs unlit;*
> *And at the corner where the stable is,*
> *Delays only to urinate, and spit.*

ELIOT WAS MUCH CLOSER to his central concerns in some fragmentary and unused lines about London, seen, as elsewhere in *The Waste Land*, as a Baudelairean inferno. A line, cancelled by Eliot himself, which read "London, your people is bound upon the wheel," reflects one of the central configurations of his imagination: "I see crowds of people, walking round in a ring" and "Here we go round the prickly pear."

The most interesting material lies not so much in the cancellations as in the early fragments, in some cases written several years before the 1921 draft, from which Eliot extracted lines or images for use in *The Waste Land*. "The Death of Saint Narcissus" is one such which provided the source for "Come in under the shadow of this red rock." Perhaps the most powerful lines in *The Waste Land* are those beginning "A woman drew her long black hair out tight," and in this edition there is a draft of them which Mrs Eliot suggests, on the evidence of handwriting, may have been written in 1914, or even before. In another manuscript of the same early date, we find a version of the opening lines of "What the Thunder said", astonishingly combined with a Laforguean conclusion in the manner of Eliot's first poetic exercises written at Harvard in 1909:

> *After the ending of this inspiration*
> *And the torches and the faces and the shouting*
> *The world seemed futile—like a Sunday outing.*

Such pivotal lines look both forward and back, emphasising the imaginative unity of Eliot's work. So, too, does a seemingly later fragment called "The Death of the Duchess." I found this exciting, because it provided the missing link between two passages of Eliot's verse which have always struck me by their resemblances, although quite separate in time: the edgily dramatic speech of the two neurotic women in "Portrait of a Lady" (1910) and "A Game of Chess" in *The Waste Land* (1921). "The Death of the Duchess" takes its point of departure from *The Duchess of Malfi*, in the scene where the Duchess is surprised in her bed-chamber by her evil brother Ferdinand. This draft by Eliot contains most of the lines later incorporated into the middle section of "A Game of Chess", while being an unmistakable attempt to recapture, perhaps even imitate, the manner of "Prufrock" and "Portrait of a Lady." There is a similar nervous but intense sexuality:

> *With her back turned, her arms were bare*
> *Fixed for a question, her hands behind her hair*
> *And the firelight shining where the muscle drew.*

At one place Pound has scribbled in the margin, "cadence reproduction from Prufrock or Portrait of a Lady."

When the *Waste Land* manuscripts were first discovered I feared that they might disintegrate the poem as we have always known it. But Mrs Eliot's edition reassuringly makes this look unlikely: *The Waste Land*, in its final version, is so obviously superior to the drafts—apart from the special case of "Death by Water"—that they are not likely to affect our reading of it. What they can provide is the traditional Romantic pleasure of seeing how a great poet's mind works.

GERTRUDE PATTERSON'S BOOK[2] is an intelligent but

[2] *T. S. Eliot: Poems in the Making*. By GERTRUDE PATTERSON. Manchester University Press, £2.40.

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scrappy study of Eliot's early poems up to *The Waste Land*, the manuscripts of which she was able to inspect in the New York Public Library. She is absolutely right to emphasise the element of assemblage or collage in Eliot's method of composition, and the way in which his multiple perspectives recall the contemporary work of the Cubist painters. But her account of Eliot's early career contains the customary amount of slightly inaccurate literary history that seems inevitable in his commentators, though Mrs Eliot has at last set the record straight in the biographical introduction to her edition. There is too much not very relevant material in Miss Patterson's book, notably about Ezra Pound and the Imagist movement, which tends to blur the fact that Eliot wrote some of his finest poems—"Prufrock", "Portrait of a Lady", "Preludes", "Rhapsody on a Windy Night"—several years before he had heard of Pound or Imagism. Pound may have been, as Eliot generously acknowledged in the dedication to *The Waste Land, il miglior fabbro*; but it was the unknown young Harvard graduate student of 1910 and 1911 who was the greater innovator.

Aware and Unaware

IT IS STILL difficult to believe that what is almost certainly the greatest novel of this century, E. M. Forster's *A Passage to India*, came out as long ago as 1924. In that book, Forster's prevailing theme of the opposition between the enlightened and the unaware mind and heart found what Eliot would have called their "objective correlative"—that is to say, Forster's major preoccupation perfectly suited his subject-matter and scene. Then, except for short stories, the first-rate *Aspects of the Novel* (1927) and a few rather ephemeral works, there was silence. Incentive and inspiration seemed to have forsaken Forster, and he remained as a living classic with the few novels he had written, particularly *A Passage to India*.

Forster is dead now and the posthumous publication of *Maurice*[1] explains a great deal. It was finished, after several alterations, in 1914, and even further later ones. We should be grateful to P. N. Furbank for his assiduous editing of the book and his excellent *Introduction* to it. It was Forster's own wish that *Maurice* should not be published until after his death. One reason for this was his realisation that homosexuality—the book's overt theme—would never be publicly acceptable in 1914. On meeting Edward Carpenter in 1913, he became almost blindingly aware that homosexuality *was* something to be accepted, whether practised or otherwise; he saw that, as Furbank points out, it could be an "ennobling" love. He had never before dared to deal with the subject except in rather facetious stories. Lowes Dickinson, who disliked the stories, admired *Maurice*, so also did Forrest Reid, a more recent friend of Forster's. Furbank tells us, too, that even in the 1960s, when no one could be offended, Forster still refused to allow the book to be published in his lifetime.

Now we have *Maurice*. What is its real value? I would say considerable; it is beautifully written and shaped, and devised with an artifice which conceals itself. The subject-matter is treated with great delicacy and compassion, and the theme of the book is in line with all Forster's other novels—the aware and the unaware mind and heart. But in *Maurice* there is a subtle difference. The working-out or presentation of his theme lies deeply and directly within the two main characters, Maurice Hall and Clive Durham. The plot concerns the difference between the recognition of Maurice's awakening to his true feelings and Clive's more alive and earlier but misguided realisation of his.

Maurice comes from a suburban family and third-rate Preparatory and Public Schools, while Clive is a scion of the squirearchy. The two meet at a party in Cambridge and suddenly discover that they are at the same College. Their first argument is about religion; Clive has already discarded Christianity and taken over Plato. Through him, Maurice does the same. The development of their love for each other is treated both sparely and profoundly. There is much conflict, but the two young men have one happy innocent day after Maurice has become aware of his feelings for Clive and before he is "sent down" for neglecting lectures and Chapel. Clive, "the best classical scholar of his year", remains. They communicate by letters after this, and later Maurice visits Clive's home which possesses a rather alarming magnificence for him. Having at first refused to apologise to the Dean of his College, he relents so that the two young men can have another year at Cambridge. Clive then starts work at the bar and Maurice goes into business.

The two men have, by their love, educated each other: here, one recalls Forster's words "only connect." But soon more conflict enters: after an illness, Clive goes to Greece alone, decides that he is really heterosexual and later marries. Maurice is heart-broken; he cannot understand and the world seems empty. Clive tries to help but cannot. Now Maurice's deepest sufferings begin. He tries unsuccessfully to be cured of his homosexuality. But for him—and here his own relationship with Clive is reversed—his full nature is realised in his reciprocated love for a very simple man, Alec Scudder.

It is impossible to overrate the clarity and subtlety of this comparatively short novel. Characters are shown in the round; incidents and emotions are handled with extreme skill. There is nothing to shock, only a book to move us and make us think deeply; in short, here is a posthumously published novel by a genius.

Elizabeth Jennings

[1] *Maurice*. By E. M. FORSTER. Edward Arnold, £2.

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POINTS OF THE COMPASS

A Document from Brussels

From the First to the Second Europe

By "A European"

THIS IS A bitter-sweet period for many of the founding fathers of Europe. Not only are the British, whom so many of them never really wanted, on the point of entry, but above all the first Europe, the Europe of the European Economic Community, seems to be in a phase of painful changes.

Many of the first Europeans have long since reconciled themselves to the fact that certain parts of the Treaties of Rome and Paris have survived only with difficulty. What with special national wishes and new developments in the supply of energy and the organisation of steel production and trade, the European Coal & Steel Community has quickly lost importance. EURATOM was perhaps never what it was supposed to be; who knows, perhaps it was never supposed to be what the Treaty said it was supposed to be. The far-reaching difference of interest between France as a nuclear power and the five other member-states became plain during the preparation of an agreement with the Vienna atomic energy officials for the recognition of EURATOM controls as equivalent to direct Vienna controls in connection with the Non-Proliferation Treaty. No straining and stretching of the treaty can disguise the fact that EURATOM has become an empty shell. Some steps taken by France in particular suggest that some would even like to scrap the shell.

But, as I have said, not many tears will be shed over E.C.S.C. and EURATOM. In regard to the development of a Common Agricultural Policy the situation is quite different. The fact that for years this has been the E.E.C.'s problem child will be admitted even by those who with an almost alarming wealth of technical ideas have demonstrated that it has got out of any real control. Nevertheless it has been a well-loved problem child, and now it too is in danger.

The decision of the European Agriculture Ministers to combine a common structural policy with a common price policy was overdue; but, in the form that it was taken last spring, it was basically part of the otherwise observable trend to a re-nationalisation of agricultural policy. To Italy, structural policy means aid; to the others, price policy means subsidies. The trend is even plainer in the consequences of the currency decisions of recent years. In 1969 France gladly seized the opportunity of its devaluation to free her agricultural market a little from the Common Market for the benefit of her own farmers; the Federal Republic of Germany no less eagerly did likewise, first in 1969 and again in 1971; and Mr Geoffrey Rippon has already announced a small option on the common non-community in favour of his hill farmers. Strictly speaking, for years past only the Common Agricultural *fund* has existed, but not the Common Agricultural *market*. Ineffective common agricultural price agreements exist, but no common agricultural policy. To put it bluntly,

The discussion of the European Future has now taken on a new form. The historic vote of the British Parliament on 28 October 1971, and the Brussels signing by the Four of the Treaty of Accession *(22 January) have made it possible, at long last, to move from the vagueness of general ideals (and the often empty eloquence of partisanship) to the intellectual challenge of rethinking, restating, reforming.*

Perhaps the most important first step in this direction was taken by a high member of the European Commission who wrote this article, under the pseudonym of "Wieland Europa," for the German weekly, "Die Zeit." It was widely quoted (in sensationalised little snippets), and it caused something of a "constitutional crisis" in Brussels. We have now translated it in full, for it remains a relevant and very remarkable document which augurs well for the role of "democratic self-criticism" in the historic transition from what the author calls the antiquated First Europe to the emerging Second Europe.

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those who are not Frenchmen or E.E.C. Europeans of the heroic old days will shed no tears over this development, but will rather wish for its moderate but deliberate continuation.

Apart from agricultural policy, the Customs Union has so far provided the cement that has held the E.E.C. together. This, too, has not survived the last year entirely unscathed. On the introduction of the system of general customs preferences for developing countries, one country (West Germany) for the first time called for and put through a system of fixed quotas of imports by the member-states. This may seem objectively reasonable, or at any rate intelligible; but it makes the Customs Union a mockery, a mere fiction for the outside world.

The publicly little-mentioned problem of the relationship between the expanded E.E.C. and the so-called remnants of EFTA, neutral Switzerland and Sweden in particular, is here of much greater importance. It is no accident that E.E.C.-Europeans of the first hour wanted to have customs barriers re-erected between the whole of the expanded Community and the remnants of EFTA (between Britain and Switzerland, for instance). It is, similarly, no accident that the Council of Ministers, so far from inclining to such ideas, is tending towards the much more convincing policy, favoured by some members of the Commission, of abolishing all customs barriers in Europe.[1]

The probable attitude of the Council of Ministers on this matter means, however, that the European communities regard the idea of the customs union that was their origin and point of departure as *no longer* the basis of their existence. They feel strong enough for their cohesion to be based on something else.

NOTHING SO PLAINLY DEMONSTRATES the necessity of the transition from the First to the Second Europe, the weakness of E.E.C. Mark I and the importance of E.E.C. Mark II, as the projected Economic & Monetary Union. The attempt to attain this ambitious and momentous aim by the methods of the Europe of the Treaty of Rome basically failed on the night of 13-14 December 1970. On that occasion the Council of Ministers, with the pettifoggery characteristic of the E.E.C., so lost sight of the politically important issues that the session broke down in the early hours of the morning over the statement that at the final stage of the Union the Community institutions "should be adapted to this end." The substitute resolution that was later agreed upon (on 8 and 9 February 1971) was, above all, a token of good will. How little political binding force it had was demonstrated in May, when West Germany and the Netherlands withdrew from the agreement that had just been reached.

The history of the Economic & Monetary Union has by no means come to an end. On the contrary, it is to be hoped that there will be many more chapters, and that they will make happier reading than those written so far. But to me at least happier means more political.

THE ECONOMIC UNION is the first great venture of the European Community that goes far beyond the Rome treaties, even in substance. The fact that it was set out upon with such great seriousness demonstrates the intention of the member-states to carry Europe further. The fact that they have so far failed to do so demonstrates the limitations both of the treaties themselves and of the traditions of their application.

I believe that Economic Union can be made to work, but not as things are; an economic unity will be achieved, but not with the means now at Europe's disposal. Perhaps the dispute about the institutions that must "be adapted to this end" is, after all, given a certain meaning in this way. For institutions of Europe Mark I have naturally not been unaffected by the general decline of the early inspirations. In recent years it has often been said that the powers of the Commission of the European communities have continuously declined, from the Hallstein era through the Rey era right down to the Malfatti era. At all events, there is no more talk of an "embryonic European government", and there are situations in which what in the view of the originators of the Rome treaties was to have been the central European institution calls for sympathy rather than respect.

Imponderables may have contributed to this state of affairs, and these may, indeed, sometimes have been exaggerated. But, to the extent that it is true, there seems to me to be a reason for it that at first sight seems paradoxical. To the extent that Europe gains importance, the Commission loses it. The fiction of an uncontrolled European government, free from both national mandates and parliamentary questioning, was tolerable to the Member-States so long as there was little to be decided at the European level. But, as European matters became *more* important to them, so these matters have been withdrawn from the Commission or dealt with elsewhere. There is plenty of evidence for this.

One of the places at which European decisions are increasingly made (or blocked) is the least controlled, the least legitimised, and also the least qualified European institution, *i.e.*, the so-called "Committee of Permanent Representa-

[1] Unless one were once again to conclude from the wish to avoid a European free trade area expressed in France, that Europeans of the first hour and French Gaullists might surprisingly become bed-fellows.

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tives." Nine out of ten questions that have cropped up in recent years have been settled by these ambassadors of the Member-States in Brussels without their ministers having ever heard of them! If there are "technocrats" in Brussels—the celebrated object of General de Gaulle's (and also of Pompidou's) indignation—then these are they; officials *de facto* responsible to no one and *de jure* responsible to no parliament, who have become the administrators of European affairs. The feeble consolation is that they dealt mostly with such matters as the trade in frozen half-carcasses of beef, the labelling of mayonnaise bottles, and the free movement of midwives. To that extent the Permanent Representatives represent the essence of the first Europe, or what remains of it. It fits in with my argument that the weakening of the European Commission has *not* led to a strengthening of the Council of Ministers, for instance, but has rather gone hand in hand with the latter's growing ineffectiveness, for it too has increasingly lost its political function.

Let me put it more pointedly. If the negotiations for British entry had been concerned with the real political issues involved—those of sovereignty, joint foreign policy, and other political objectives and institutions—the Council of Ministers of the European Community could never have brought them to a successful conclusion. It was able to do so only because they were concerned with questions of the first Europe—butter and sugar, lamb and fish, parabolically climbing financial percentages, and the possibilities of a transition period for agriculture. Here the Council was on its home ground, and the foreign ministers of six European nations were able to be genuine agriculture ministers once again.

And the European Parliament? A democrat can only feel shame at the sight of adult parliamentarians, honourably elected in their home countries, acting out the farce they have to perform at Strasbourg or Luxembourg for a whole week ten times a year. Either they have to discuss matters that interest them marginally, if at all, or they are not allowed to discuss questions in which they are interested. In neither event are they able to decide anything.

But that is not the heart of my argument. What concerns me much more is the following. The Treaties of Rome and Paris started a process of European integration that has accomplished a great deal—but that process has now run its course. Many things may be responsible for this. In a purely technical sense we have exhausted the possibilities of the treaties, for the inconsistency between the political aspirations and the everyday reality of the European Community has become all too obvious. The supra-national illusions of the initial stages have turned out to be a hindrance rather than a spur to real political cooperation. Above all, the illogical path to Europe that many wished to follow has led us into a *cul-de-sac;* there is no objective necessity that can force the nations of Europe to rescue a problematical agricultural arrangement by means of a monetary union, a problematical monetary union by an economic vision, or a problematical economic union by an all-embracing common policy.

What this senseless path leads to instead is to common policy not being formulated, to the economic and monetary union being frustrated at the outset; the farmers alone know that Europe exists.

The illogicality of Europe Mark I has been pressed in time up against its own limits, and a great deal that characterised it has fallen by the wayside. It no longer generates the energies that will meet the expectations that the European states of today and tomorrow, the Member-States of the E.E.C., and those that will join it in 1973, have of it. There must be a new beginning to move forward from what remains of the old accomplishments.

WE ARE CONFRONTED with an obvious paradox. Seldom, perhaps never before, has the political will for European Union been so marked as it has been since last year's summit conference at The Hague. The BENELUX states are its traditional champions. In view of the unhopeful internal political situation in Signor Colombo's Italy, Europe was, so to speak, discovered there as the hope of the future. Willy Brandt's Federal Republic wants to show that it is in earnest with its policy of equilibrium of an *Ostpolitik* as well as a *Westpolitik*. Pompidou's France is slowly shaking off the de Gaulle nightmare and simultaneously seeking protection in the European embrace from its increasingly more incalculable partner, Western Germany. Whatever the motives may be, interests coincide in the will to strengthen and expand the European Community.

The *expansion* seems to be assured, but not the *strengthening*. The First Europe has in fact turned out to be incapable of taking up and transforming into political practice the impulses radiated by the new political will. This paradox must be resolved, if we are not to be left with merely the fragments of the old inspiration.

But how? Where do the beginnings of new possibilities of European development lie? The controversial clause of the final communiqué of The Hague conference of December 1969 is undoubtedly Clause 15 on "Political Cooperation." In this the heads of state and government charged their foreign ministers with examining the question of "how, with a view to expansion, progress can best be made in the field of political

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unification." This seems to amount to very little; and, in the opinion of many people, the committee chaired by M. Davignon (the director-general of the Belgian Foreign Ministry), which presented a report based on it, did not make a great deal of it either.

The Davignon report proposed that the Foreign Ministers of the Member-States of the Community should meet for regular consultations outside the institutions of the Community; and, so far, two such meetings have taken place, in November 1970 at Munich and June 1971 in Paris.[2] The report also proposed that the political heads of the foreign ministries of the Six should meet for regular consultations; and such consultations have also taken place. Among other things, they decided that, on certain questions, common instructions should be sent to the ambassadors of the Six in the outside world. Since then there have been meetings in a growing number of capitals of the diplomatic representatives of the Member-States of the European Community to discuss joint procedure.

All this has been the subject of criticism in the Commission, the European parliament, the pro-Europe press, and by a number of prominent politicians. They all deplore the "inter-governmental" nature of the Davignon consultations, as well as the by-passing of existing institutions and, above all, the alleged regression from "Community action" to common action. In my opinion this criticism is misplaced. The Davignon formula is the most important step to the second Europe that has yet been taken, and it could well be the basis for important new European developments.

THE SECRET OF ITS SUCCESS is a simple one. In their consultations the foreign ministers can again meet as foreign ministers. They discuss such things as a common European attitude to the Middle Eastern conflict or to the European security conference. And, as these subjects are of greater interest to them than frozen half-carcasses of beef, the labelling of mayonnaise bottles or even the free movement of midwives, their discussions are rather more serious. The political heads of the foreign ministries have for the first time been involved in the process of European coordination; and they begin to feel the stimulus and significance of political co-operation between nations having similar interests. This applies even more strongly to the ambassadors of the Six throughout the world, who soon note that as spokesmen of a Community of European States they are taken much more seriously than they were before.

The Davignon formula has three characteristics, all of which are anathema to the Mark I Europeans of the first round, though I am inclined to regard them as guarantees of success and to that extent the beginnings of a new European future:

1. The formula is not supra-national but inter-national. It brings together the governments of the countries concerned as representatives of basically sovereign states. This diminishes the temptation alternately to wear the National and the Community hat, or to hide behind "European" phraseology. Paradoxical though this may seem at first sight, the *inter-national* formula commits those involved to a greater extent than does the supra-national fiction.

2. The formula means changing from indirect to direct political discussion, and from the Euro-jabberwocky of the Council of Ministers to the normal, rather livelier language of politics, in which some things are even called by their right names, and sometimes even express real attitudes. The formula is also the diametrical opposite of the dreadful habit of the European Community of saying things in concealed and, if possible, invisible form, of counting it as a success if the others do not quite realise what one is driving at, and at all events of *never* saying what one actually thinks. (It is this habit that in the negotiations for British entry, particularly in regard to the guarantees for sugar imports, justifiably alarmed third parties.)

3. The formula makes it possible to escape from the limitations of the Treaties and their interpretation. No one can appeal to the terms of a treaty to block discussion of a subject that carries the matter further; discussion of matters of interest takes precedence over textual interpretation. This opens up possibilities of development *unknown* to the Council of Ministers; it gives a new openness to political cooperation as such *without* the senseless burden of over-interpreted treaty texts. Here the Davignon formula has contributed to raising an anchor that kept the European ship at its berth for all too long.

THE FORMULA WAS DEVISED for cooperation in foreign policy, but is immediately transferable to other fields. The numerous bilateral meetings of Ministers and Heads of state and government (which, since The Hague, have been much more numerous and above all much more European than before) are in accordance with it. The meetings of Ministers of Labour and Social Security, Justice and Education that have either taken place or have already been arranged are on the same footing. Also the Ministers of Agriculture have made real progress only when they have met on the basis of the Davignon formula, though if they are to work

[2] Since this was written, a third meeting has taken place in November 1971 in Rome.

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out a serious common policy they will have to move several more paces away from the huffing and puffing usual in the Councils. Above all, the Davignon formula offers the only chance of bringing about a genuine Economic Union in Western Europe.

This occupies a key position on the road to the Second Europe. Side by side with the growing field of common action in foreign policy, it provides a second leg on which Europe will in the future be able to stand and, hopefully, also to walk. And, just as common foreign policy can be associated with common trade policy, so too can Economic Union be based on the beginnings of medium-term coordination, internal harmonisation, and even of the monetary union.

Meanwhile, a "warning clause" (*clause de prudence*) on the transition to the second phase is no substitute for the necessity of a political decision at its outset—a decision going beyond pleasing non-committal talk about "stability and growth." The members of an Economic Union, in full awareness of the monetary, budgetary, and local political consequences, must first agree on what they call stability and how much growth they want if their efforts are to be successful.

The logical or coherent—perhaps it would be better to call it simply political—Europe that will then arise will deal with currency problems on the basis of a common economic policy and with agricultural problems on the basis of a fiscal policy. But this kind of political union will come about only on the basis of the Davignon formula, *i.e.*, internationally, directly, and without over-interpretation of any old formal text.

The Davignon formula is certainly not the only movement towards the Second Europe. The European Community has occasionally played a role capable of further useful development—in the Kennedy round, for instance, and in Afro-Asian development policy, and in the attempts to fight inflation and to increase agricultural productivity. But the formula marks an important new beginning—or, rather, it might do so. For it has an obvious weakness. Non-binding conversations on important matters are more useful than technically binding conversations on unimportant matters. That is where the Davignon formula represents a step forward in relation to the First Europe. But it can become fully effective only if it becomes a European doctrine; and it will become a doctrine only if a fourth element, namely bindingness, is added to the three mentioned above.

The Finance Ministers of the European Community have applied the principle simply and straightforwardly. They meet at the invitation of the representative of the host country and, if their conversations are intended to lead to decision, they simply declare themselves to be a Council of Ministers, at Hamburg, in Brussels, in Paris or in London, or wherever they may be. But even this leaves a great deal to chance. International, direct, and open political cooperation will become binding only if a number of conditions are fulfilled. *(1)* Meetings of responsible ministers must take place regularly and with a view to reaching decisions. *(2)* Machinery must be developed for converting discussions into decisions, and a form must be found for the carrying out of joint decisions. *(3)* Conversations and decisions, but in particular decisions, must be subject to effective control.

These conditions are the points of departure for the institutions of the Second Europe. Institutions fulfilling these conditions certainly do not provide any guarantee of success. But they can lead further, and it is therefore worth asking where they will be leading and how they can bring about significant progress.

WHAT IS THE Second Europe to look like? How are we realistically to visualise it for a period of, say, ten years ahead?

Let me begin with the inner shape of the European Community. One of the great weaknesses of the First Europe lies in its craze for harmonisation. Wherever there has been an opportunity for drawing up or proposing common regulations—whether in regard to the shape of bottles, or units of account, or credit insurance systems, or methods of ice-cream manufacture, or working-hours for lorry drivers, or the size of agricultural units—the opportunity has been seized. Fortunately, the aspiration for harmonisation has often remained only an aspiration—for the good will in the matter that seems above all to have animated the Commission (and to have turned it into a bureaucratic Leviathan) has some weaknesses that are impossible to overlook.

Those who, wherever possible, seek a *similar* if not *identical* solution for the Member-States of the European Community run the risk of always generalising the solution that involves the greatest amount of state regulation. It is much more unlikely that France will make its Central Bank independent of the Government than that the German *Bundesbank* will become more dependent. That Italy will do away with its system of supporting exports is less likely than that Belgium will adopt that system. Besides, "harmonisation" itself implies regulation. Thus Europe becomes more and more bureaucratic, and less and less liberal in the best sense of the word. The First Europe is not only an illogical but also an illiberal, bureaucratic Europe.

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That is the first thing. Another consequence of the craze for harmonisation is even more problematical. Those who seek similar solutions wherever possible—those who, in other words, regard harmonisation as inherently a good thing—quickly lose their sense of the difference between the important and the unimportant, the necessary and the superfluous. More than that, they derogate from the strength of the differences between regions and nations and run the risk of creating a Europe reduced to uniformity. Certainly we are still remote from that; the strength of these differences is certainly greater than that of the First Europe; but the search for European solutions for their own sake is a discernible attitude—and a dangerous one.

Not everything in Europe is good just because it is European. A European Europe is really a variegated, multiform Europe. It is a Europe in which there is joint action and regulation of matters that can be better dealt with by joint action and regulation, or for which joint action is perhaps the only sensible solution. The transition from the First to the Second Europe calls for a change from the dogma of harmonisation to the principle of "subsidiarity."

THERE IS NO NECESSARY European interest in agricultural units being of similar size, and there *may* be none in a common agricultural policy as a whole; there is a necessary European interest in a common trade policy. There is *no* necessary interest in a similar regional-structural policy for the whole of Europe; there *is* an interest in the elimination of regional pockets where the standard of living is excessively low. There is *no* European interest in the creation of a uniform banking system in every European country; there *is* an interest in the establishment of favourable conditions for the development of multi-national companies. There is a common interest in the unrestricted movement of labour, in technological cooperation and the opening of internal frontiers to the movement of men and goods. There is an unrenounceable common interest in democratic forms of government and their effective democratic control, even though Parliamentary and Presidential democracies, Republics and Monarchies, One-chamber and Two-chamber systems are all perfectly reconcilable with that interest.

Even under the strictest interpretation of the principle of "subsidiarity" there remains an elementary European interest in increasing coordination of national policies in relation to the outside world. The middle-sized and the smaller states of the present age, even if they are highly developed, are individually *too weak* to resist the gravitational forces of the Super-powers. They are much too weak to play an independent role in the world as a motor force of progress that might benefit humanity in a context of peace and freedom. Here, perhaps, lies a European Europe's constituent task—in which the First Europe often lamentably failed. Here, too—and here in particular—it is necessary to speak internationally, directly, openly, and at the same time with a view to binding decisions.

The relations of the European Community of today and tomorrow with the Super-powers are necessarily complex. In regard to the United States there are important common interests as well as differences. We share an interest in the maintenance of conditions in which humanitarian principles and practices are respected and in which the rule of law and (whenever possible) democracy prevail. (In view of infringements of these principles on both sides of the Atlantic, it is necessary again to point out here that charity begins at home.) This common interest is buttressed by the principle of freedom of international commerce and trade. This is the basis for joint efforts in trade as well as in defence policy.

The community of interests is great, but not all-embracing. What is good for America is not necessarily good for Europe, and *vice versa*. It is no accident that the picture presented to the rest of the world by a community of medium and smaller powers acting jointly differs greatly from that presented by a Super-power (quite apart from the vitality of Europe and the momentary world-political weakness of the United States). For that reason many countries in the world are seeking closer links with a European Community, because they are loosening their links with the United States, which are felt to involve dependence, and want to diversify their foreign political ties. To many, Europe could represent the hope of a world of peaceful progress without hegemony or the arrogance of power. It is a basic interest of a European Europe to support this hope.

RELATIONS WITH the other Super-power, the Soviet Union, are clearly not simplified by this. The position of the middle-sized and smaller countries of Eastern Europe does not differ so very greatly from that of those of the rest of the world. They, too, would gladly exchange the arrogance of a Super-power for a limited dilution of national sovereignty in a free community, but they cannot do so; this explains the obvious interest of the Soviet Union in keeping the European Community weak and forbidding its allies to develop relations with "the monster." On the other hand, the Soviet Union is also interested in using the integration of free Europe to reinforce the continually threatened cohesion of its own power zone.

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Here lies the quandary for us Europeans. The cohesion of the European Community must be strengthened without promoting a new consolidation of the power *blocs*. That is the foreign-policy tightrope that a European Europe must walk between the Super-powers today. But Europe is not yet walking, at any rate not in foreign policy. Torn between incredulous astonishment at and fear of its own potentialities, for the time being it remains immobile in a world that needs nothing so much as an active Europe aware of its task and responsibilities.

In relation to the Super-powers this applies only indirectly. It does apply directly to the many countries in the world that feel the first phase of their development to be a mere continuation of colonial dependence by other means, and are torn between resignation to powerful external demands and a no less dangerous deliberate acceptance of poverty. The greatest task facing Europe is that of forging a modern Development policy involving cooperation without dependence. Such a policy could be instituted everywhere, though it could not be simultaneously conducted everywhere. Africa and the Mediterranean states would not be the worst partners to begin with, though there are others whom we should not neglect.

THERE REMAINS an aspect of European potentialities about which many superficial and wrong-headed pronouncements have been made. This is Defence policy, a subject on which one hesitates to embark. It should be clear at the outset that a European Europe has a special role to play in conflicts both close at hand and in distant regions of the world. The Mediterranean will remain a powder-barrel for some time. Apart from short-term mediation, the foundations must be established for a longer-term stability without false tolerance, and above all false intolerance, of the new ideologies. The European Community could have a Mediterranean policy that even Germans found convincing. If it had such a policy, it would provide a basis on which to offer its services in relation to other focal points in world politics, especially in Asia.

These services do not include the provision of a "third" European fleet to take its place beside the American Sixth Fleet and the Soviet Eskadra. The Second Europe cannot, and should not, hope to acquire dubious respect by military and naval strength. But military power as a tool of foreign policy is one thing, and a convincing capacity for self-defence is another. Perhaps a Second Europe would do well to re-examine the prologue to the First Europe, namely, the failure of the European Defence Community. The European Defence Community will not be resurrected, and it is well that that should be so. But the idea of a "new partnership" that President Nixon made the basis of his Message to Congress entitles one to take a new look at the Atlantic alliance; that alliance can serve to strengthen a European Europe.

ALL THIS RESULTS in a staccato of subjunctives. Many potentialities (and missed opportunities) have been left unmentioned. I have not mentioned China, not wishing to enter the realm of the fabulous; nor the E.E.C. customs preference policy, in order not to fan positively notorious anger at the conflict between necessity and reality, to say nothing of the opportunities. I am concerned with something more important. The Second Europe cannot afford to imitate the First Europe in so disgracefully ignoring the interests of its members or so meagrely acknowledging them (if it acknowledged them at all). I am not thinking of any romantic or utopian demands. If the European nations do not decide jointly to pursue the *necessary*, that is to say, their common interests, they will become the laggards of progress. If they continue to regard their interests, as they have done so far, they will become the most obvious laggards in the world and no less sick for that. The need is for a Europe that is hopeful and self-assertive in the pursuance of its legitimate interests, and it is time that it was brought into being.

THE AIMS OF A EUROPEAN COMMUNITY are not new, but it is useful to restate them. The institutions intended to make these aims attainable are no longer very new either; in point of fact they need a thorough overhaul. This is a field in which it is even more difficult than elsewhere to find answers that will remain valid in the long term. But there are some important prospects and some strategic decisions that could be made in their light.

The European Community easily grows agitated over the democratic defects of others; those who grow agitated would do well to look to their own house and its need of reforms and repairs. The structure of the First Europe does not stand up well even by the most generous standards of democracy, and unless swift remedial measures are taken, the First Europe will not survive and the Second will not be born.

The First Europe has been marked by a certain institutional dogmatism. Decisions must be made exactly as laid down in the basic treaties and not otherwise. The fact that nevertheless they *have* been made otherwise has led to an extravagant institutional hypocrisy and, among other things, to the establishment of the committee of Permanent Representatives (including

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Deputy Representatives and other, not merely verbal, monstrosities). A phase of institutional flexibility, as well as of co-existence of institutions of different types, would do Europe good. But the most important prospect is a different one. The Germans in particular have constantly, and with some enthusiasm, engaged in theological strife about supra-nationality and the abandonment of sovereignty. The traditional—in fact, the official—German position has been marked almost by pleasure at the prospect of the renunciation of sovereignty. Whether this was a substitute for the improbable reunification of the country, or compensation for the wild nationalism of the past, or arose out of embarrassment at the lack of a foreign policy—whatever the reason may have been, the Federal Republic systematically weakened itself and Europe by supra-national illusions. Many Germans probably still think that the Luxembourg compromise, the acceptance of the rule of unanimous Council decisions, has definitely weakened Europe. But this only applies to a Europe of fantasts and professors.

As far as West Germany is concerned, so much self-denial will one day have to be paid for. Those who wish to prevent a revival of nationalism are well advised to pay special attention to the defence of national interests; otherwise they find themselves sitting on a horrific pendulum, swinging between two extremes. The aim must be, not to bend to the will of others, but to combine one's own interests with theirs.

"Europe" will ultimately become a reality to the extent that it is supported by its members. For the time being majority decisions on agricultural prices, let alone on economic union, can mean only that the minority will go their own way. In the medium term that we are discussing here, the majority principle can have only limited application. For—to tread the thin ice of controversial matters for a moment—the crucial issue, so far as the Europe of the future is concerned, is neither supra-national fictions nor a mere increase in the number of its member-states; it is neither the establishment of an entirely new third structure over and above that of its member-states nor the separate existence of the latter; it is neither the renunciation nor the unchanged exercise of sovereignty. It is the attempt by the nations of Europe to exercise sovereignty in common.

This phrase, which was coined in the European papers of the Independent Republican Giscard d'Estaing, is a highly significant one. In an ever-widening field the nations of Europe resolve to reach joint decisions on questions on which they have sovereign power of decision. This commits them to trying to reach common decisions, but not to accepting decisions they believe to be irreconcilable with their interests. The Davignon formula is less than that; the history of the Economic Union may provide an object-lesson on the possibilities of the joint exercise of sovereignty.

Thus, Europe is strongest where national interests coincide with common aims (and also when national aims coincide with common interests). Durable institutions can be built on this foundation. Strategic decisions along these lines might concern European ministers, the European Commission, and a European Parliament.

IT IS NO ACCIDENT that the old idea of the appointment of European Ministers continually crops up in the member-states. The advantages are indisputable. European Ministers would take the place of Foreign Ministers on the Council, who are substantively not competent (because they are concerned with other things), as well as of the Permanent Representatives, who are politically not competent (because they are civil servants). In the member-states European Ministers could better undertake the hard task of coordination between the agencies concerned than institutions created *ad hoc* (such as West Germany's "committee of European state secretaries"). European Ministers would need no special department over and above a small working staff. They would be members of their cabinets, but would meet their European colleagues more often. They would attend consultations under the Davignon plan, and take part in all other joint activities of member-states, even though their responsibilities did not always extend to them. They would develop a joint secretariat on the basis of the present Council secretariat and perhaps take over some of the work of the Commission. Whether it amounts to a European Government or not, the Council of European Ministers will be the characteristic Institution of the Second Europe—just as the Commission was that of the First.

After the expansion of the European Community from six to ten members, the idea of a Commission of fourteen members with equal rights, working theoretically on the collegial system, is not a very attractive one. Inefficiency could hardly be more expensively organised. The Commission has important functions, even though President Pompidou has difficulty in seeing the fact. *(1)* It conducts the current common (or at any rate communal) business of the Community. *(2)* It works out practical proposals on the basis of political decisions when these have been made. *(3)* It mediates in critical Council discussions, and in its role as "guardian

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of the Treaties" defends and watches over what has been jointly accomplished.

But—so that all this may be done without false claims and thus presumably better—all traces of its nature as "a government in embryo" must vanish. A president and two or three vice-presidents (each with his own field: say, at first, internal affairs, external affairs, and agriculture) would be fully sufficient. National quotas, *i.e.*, the careful distribution of positions among fourteen or twenty-eight persons coming from the member-states, could then be applied at the next level, that of the director-general. All duplication of work with that of the Council should be avoided; a gradual unification of the two would be rational and sensible. All this could be begun soon, and those reluctant to abandon old dreams should be reminded that *the future of Europe* is much more important than that of the European Commission.

There remains the democratic deficit—the elimination of which, because of the political conditions in the Economic Union alone, is an essential condition for the coming into being of the Second Europe. Again, we are not concerned with eye-wash. Direct elections to a European Parliament would change nothing; such extravagance can be spared for the time being. As its present president Behrendt has correctly pointed out, a parliament needs political rights; its members are elected as it is. An end must be put to the constitutional make-believe according to which an impotent parliament keeps a check on the *quasi*-government of the Commission. The opposite number to the European Parliament should, in the first place, be the Council of Foreign Ministers (their responsibility to their national parliaments could in principle gradually be replaced by responsibility to the European Parliament).

The present European Community has no budgetary office; those who spend money generally account to themselves alone. A small loan to the future member Britain could lead to the setting up of a permanent parliamentary committee with budget-control functions. The seat of Europe's parliament should be where its other institutions are, so that serious and regular contacts ensued. Parliament should automatically be involved in each new activity of the Community, *i.e.*, its field of activity should not be restricted by the treaties. Thus, the member-states should make a separate treaty for a European Parliament, and preparatory work for this could be begun at once.

THESE SUGGESTIONS are certainly not exhaustive; not even all the institutions have been mentioned. New institutions could be established, or old ones reactivated, within the framework of Davignon formula. In spite of the tired recent meetings of its Council of Ministers, Western European Union might one day be worth reviving by means of an injection of live cells, such as took place for different reasons recently in the case of the good old O.E.E.C. The institutional implications of a great European Free Trade Zone, of which the European Community would be only a part, should also be openly examined, just as should the future of the Council of Europe.

In general, it is conceivable then that there should be several "commissions", *i.e.*, planning and executive secretariats, for European affairs. The E.E.C. Commission could very well survive alongside the coordinating agency of Central Bank Governors and a Davignon secretariat.

The Second Europe has not yet been born. Above all, let us guard against the mistake that was made in the case of the First, *i.e.*, putting a perfectionist constitution in its cradle.

In this British cooperation will be invaluable. My primary purpose in this article is to make a contribution to the discussion of the subject in certain European circles, which are as rich in professions of Europeanism as they are poor in genuine ideas and initiatives for the Europe of the future. But during this period no one can speak or write about Europe without a side-glance at Britain.

The E.E.C. Europe that Britain is now at last and so painfully preparing to enter is passing away, though it will survive for some time yet. It is a familiar fact that institutions perish by their success; they can go on living with their weaknesses for a long time. This First Europe cannot. To make the joint exercise of sovereignty by the middle-sized and smaller states of free Europe politically effective and convincing, we certainly need such sterling qualities as persistence, humour, and realism. Even more important at the present time are the British talent for calling things by their right name and Britain's incorruptible democratic tradition. With Great Britain a Europe can be created that will endure.

One reminder would seem to be appropriate. Our European aims should not be so remote from national interests as they were in the eyes of the E.E.C. Europeans of the first hour; and *vice versa*, national aims should not be so remote from European interests as some continental farmers' unions would like them to be. The political profit to be obtained from common action by the European states is great, and we can have it at a tolerable involvement of national interests. These bitter-sweet days could be sweet days if we knew what we wanted, and wanted what we knew.

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LETTERS

Illich's "Gimmick"

I AM SURPRISED that a philosopher of all people—Professor Sidney Hook in the January ENCOUNTER—should waste his, and our, time in analysing a thesis as manifestly absurd as Ivan Illich's *De-Schooling Society*. (Is Ivan Illich, by the way, a real name? Or is it a leg-pulling pseudonym?) My surprise is not so much caused by the fact that Professor Hook should apparently take the Illich book seriously enough to write several thousand words about it, but that he should not have spotted the motives behind the production of this particular tome.

For it is obvious that such a book belongs to the new and profitable genre of "gimmick literature", which is written to earn the author a modest notoriety, even if not much in the way of royalties. And notoriety these days may, with luck, lead to an appearance on television. (If the writer has been outrageous enough he can even hope to get a spot on the David Frost show.) And from television to an invitation to speak at conferences, requests for articles in progressive magazines, the spontaneous creation of a little body of disciples (some of the female followers should be pretty)—all "perks" which are the rewards these days for writing nonsense, provided, of course, the humbug is trendy—and the Illich thesis of scrapping schools is trendy enough to satisfy the current fashion of defecating on culture.

In short, there are scores of examples of this "gimmick literature" written by the avowed enemies of intellectuals, very few of whom have had either the courage to stand up and pronounce the stuff to be rubbish, or to ignore it altogether, as one would have expected of a student of Plato. One is reminded of the suggestion of that observer who, in commenting on the confusion caused by loud-mouthed and power-hungry student-leaders, pointed out that if the media undertook collectively not to report the opinions and activities of the under-thirties for a trial period of three months, the whole problem of student revolt, the generation gap, the wickedness of parents, and so forth would vanish overnight. Not censorship. Merely a yawn. Perhaps then the shrewd exploiters of middle-age anxieties—the Illichs, the women eunuchs, the gay liberators, the arty pornographers—would go back to haranguing each other in their cellars and bed-sits and cease to bore the rest of us in the pages of ENCOUNTER.

JAMES WELLARD

London

WOULD IT were so! In another age perhaps this was how "gimmick literature" was treated. But, it is precisely a sign of our cultural crisis that today absurd and irresponsible notions, like those of Illich, are being taken seriously. I am not familiar with the scene in England, but in the U.S. these views and similar ones are widely published; their protagonists are featured on television; and in time, the nonsense is echoed by journalists, educational critics, and even by "progressive" researchers. Sometimes I am under the impression that small-town minds called to the superintendency of educational systems in some of our large American cities have been influenced by this gimmicky literature. There is little doubt that the American public (*i.e.*, comprehensive State) school has been weakened by attacks like those of Illich which urge its abolition rather than its improvement or reform. "If a Monsignor can believe this and his book gets respectful notices in the Establishment press, perhaps we are wasting tax-money . . ." probably muse some ordinary citizens as they vote down educational bond issues.

The objection, of course, is not to the expression of these absurd views in or through any medium. My concern developed only because there was no adequate reply to them in the periodical press. My mail revealed that this concern was shared by others. Recent events have shown that it is not safe to assume that absurdities and nonsense—racial, political, religious—will be ineffectual if ignored.

SIDNEY HOOK

New York

G. D. H. Cole — "Secular Saint"?

IN STRAINING to correct the exaggerated encomiums of some of the instant reviewers, Max Beloff ["G. D. H. Cole—'Secular Saint' "? ENCOUNTER, February] is himself trapped into distortions and as a result does less than justice to his subject. To speak of Cole indulging "his own sybaritic tastes" hardly accords with the evidence. There is no sign of luxury or adornment about his person in any of the portraits which accompany Margaret Cole's text nor would I judge he could be described as at all effeminate. He collected glass and books, he had a large London house and enjoyed the English countryside. The house and books were in some degree at any rate related to his work and all his "indulgences" together seem no more than a very modest and necessary relaxation from the almost unbelievable amount of work he did.

Nor does the evidence support Beloff's view that Cole was indifferent to people and insensitive to the personal elements in history. The interest in Cobbett which Beloff acknowledges is not disposed of by the irrelevant speculation that Cobbett might not have reciprocated Cole's admiration. Further, the list of Cole's writing is peppered with other biographical studies. Proper names are not absent from the *History of Socialist Thought*. In fact each volume of that study contains a special *Index of Names*.

Cole was certainly a man of strong prejudices. His anti-Americanism could crackle out like a firework, leaving a meeting or seminar in astonished silence. But prejudices are as rife in the academic world as outside. Most dons, however, choose the company in which to express them and otherwise insinuate them obliquely or bring them forward under the cloak of other more acceptable opinions. Cole in parading his

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whole mind deserves credit for honesty at least. And, more widely, a prejudice frankly expressed can be seen for what it is and treated accordingly. A related point can be made in reply to Beloff's criticism that the industrial North was not on Cole's itinerary and that he had little to do with working-class people other than the élite he met through his W.E.A. classes. Cole was certainly middle class, public school, and Oxford. He was a professional scholar and was born, brought up and passed his life in the metropolis and in the South. For Cole to go roistering at the Durham miners' gala could have had no more meaning than the cloth cap which Lord Hailsham affects when he penetrates the industrial North. Cole had a mature acceptance of himself for what he was and he was perhaps expressing this when he quoted the advice given him by Shaw "not to be a worker but to be a toff." This lack of pretence is in refreshing contrast to the inverted snobbery which afflicts some other left-wing intellectuals. And by confining his contacts with the working class to the mutually pleasurable and beneficial situation of the W.E.A., Cole did ensure that these contacts were in some real sense genuine and reciprocal.

FINALLY, the phrases "excellent teacher", "fruitful influence" strong as they may seem fall far short of the reality and capture no part of the particular ambience which Cole created. Most dons, and particularly those of distinction, have of necessity to husband themselves. So much time for research, so much for this class, so much for that committee and so on. Pupils in this circumstance are classified and graded and get a carefully judged amount of energy, time and attention doled out to them. The result is that they experience what should be the best and most personal part of their education as a sort of rationing system. But when anyone went to Cole he got neither the standard ration nor his deserts—he got everything. Ideas, books, advice, criticism and enthusiasm in extraordinary abundance and given in a spirit of equality without vanity or restraint. How Cole managed to do it remains a mystery but it left those who were fortunate enough to come upon him with a model for the conduct, not only of teaching, but of all personal relationships which it is difficult to imagine equalled let alone surpassed. Cole may not qualify as a saint but he was far above the ruck of mankind and even when Beloff has painted in the warts the whole portrait remains an inspiration.

PETER COLLISON

Department of Social Studies,
University of Newcastle
upon Tyne

PROFESSOR COLLISON is, of course, entitled to his own views about Cole as a teacher as he knew him. My own purpose was not to mock Cole's personality or tastes, but to show how they affected his outlook on the world, and consequently the content, not the character, of his teaching. I did, after all, know Cole not only when he was a teacher at the height of his influence, but also later on as a colleague; and I have discussed him with those even closer to him in age. I do not find in what Professor Collison writes anything to shake my argument that there was a certain artificiality about Cole's view of the world and self-identification with the proletariat, and that in relation to the most important political phenomena of his own time—the Russian Revolution and its consequences—he failed to give the kind of lead which would have made the Party he favoured more equipped for its role in British, European and world politics.

I note that Professor Collison does not dispute the quotations that I drew from Cole's own works, nor indeed the conclusions that I learned from them.

MAX BELOFF

All Souls College,
Oxford

Maxim Gorky's Death

IN his article on "Maxim Gorky: The Shame & the Glory" [ENCOUNTER, March], Melvin J. Lasky notes that Gorky supported Stalin's extermination policy against "heretics and dissenters", and he goes on to write: "It could be that Gorky himself was, subsequently, exterminated; Richard Hare, in his biography, writes that 'we still do not know for certain.' . . ."

Robert Conquest, in his authoritative study of Stalin's purge of the 1930s, *The Great Terror* (1968), appears to be rather more certain. On p. 416 he refers to "cogent testimony" in the case of Gorky's murder.

> In the summer of 1963 an old American acquaintance of Gorky visited his 86-year-old widow, Ekaterina Peshkova, in Moscow. Of her son's death she said quite calmly that she had no doubt that it was natural. When the visitor remarked that people now said that Gorky's too had been natural, she became very agitated and exclaimed: "It's not quite so, but don't ask me to tell you about it! I won't be able to sleep a wink for three days and nights if I tell you."

As Conquest sums up, "This seems reasonably conclusive. . . . The most probable assumption is that Stalin did procure the murder of Gorky, through Yagoda. . . . That the Soviet authorities have not said anything of the Gorky case parallels their notable reluctance to give the full story even of the more political, so perhaps less disgraceful, Kirov murder."

JEAN CONSTANT

Geneva

Ireland, Again

DESPITE THE CLUMSINESS of a bi-monthly correspondence events of today (22 January) necessitate some reply to John Grigg's answer to criticism. He set out to answer (ENCOUNTER, February) my letter point by point; however, he omitted two—those dealing with the Black-and-Tans and with imperialism. Such an omission neutralises the self-confidence of his stance, as he ignores both the methods and motives of the British presence in Ireland.

Today in Derry, the British Army replied to a peaceful demonstration with an immense volume of CS gas, saturating a large part of the city at the period when most shoppers are on the streets. The area included a hospital for retarded children, a maternity home and a geriatric nursing home. The effect of the gas was such that troops were forced to wear gas-

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masks over half-a-mile from the point where the gas had been fired. Shoppers and spastics are not in the habit of carrying gas-masks even in Derry. So long as the British Army answers a peaceful demonstration indiscriminately, it is hardly surprising that the IRA answer violence with violence.

Mr Grigg concluded his letter with an unsubstantiated assertion that the Army has strong support "in all parties." I'm sure it has: so have vegetarianism and apartheid. The *facts* of military conduct are less easy to ignore on the ground in Derry. If Mr Grigg were to visit the city he could stay either in the art gallery (where troops are billeted) or on the broken floor-boards of a Creggan home recently raided by the same troops. The choice of accommodation is more eloquent than Mr Grigg's dismissal of the Compton Report.

As for imperialism, there was a time when the British were not ashamed of being called imperialist.

The above paragraphs were posted to ENCOUNTER one week before the killing by British troops of thirteen civilians in Derry on 30 January, the twenty-fourth anniversary of the assassination of Gandhi. British legalism forbids comment on these events which were described by the Tory Premier—in an unguarded moment—as a "tragedy."

To Mr. Grigg I simply offer this latest episode as the ghastly but inevitable consequence of ignoring, as he ignored, the findings of the Compton Report. In the light of the events of 30 January, the saturation of Derry with CS gas may seem trivial to some; I would argue differently—that to those who have watched military operations in Ulster, the action of the paratroopers was, however appalling, by no means a surprise.

W. J. MCCORMACK
Lecturer in English

Magee University College,
Londonderry, N. Ireland.

MR MCCORMACK IMPLIES that the IRA is only resorting to violence because the British Army is using violence. It would be hard to state the opposite of the truth more succinctly.

British opinion was rightly disgusted by the methods used by the Black and Tans. It is equally rightly convinced that the British Army has, on the whole, been showing exemplary restraint in dealing with the present terror campaign.

As I write, an enquiry is in progress into the tragic incident which occurred in Derry on 30 January. If it turns out that the troops fired indiscriminately, or without sufficient provocation, their action will be condemned. At the same time ultimate responsibility for the tragedy will rest upon those who organised the illegal march, and upon those who used it to bring about a violent confrontation with the troops.

Imperialism, as I understand it, is the rule of an alien minority, imposed by force: in other words, the sort of "political solution" that the IRA is trying to impose upon the Six Counties.

My attitude towards British imperialism, as an historical phenomenon, is one neither of pride nor of shame, but a combination of the two. Either way, however, it has nothing whatever to do with the present situation in Northern Ireland.

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Irish separatists destroyed the unity of the United Kingdom in the name of self-determination. Can they not see that the majority in Northern Ireland has as good a right as they to assert that principle?

JOHN GRIGG

London

R. D. Laing

DAVID MARTIN seems in his article on Laing's politics ["Me Teacher, You Patient", February] to be overly haunted by unemployed or partly employed pseudo-intellectuals and drop-outs, Northern London and "the windy hills" there. On my second reading Professor Martin's isolated and strongly biased views became very apparent, and if I failed to grasp the potential meaning of his points, the fact that he knows just what target to attack and just what attribution he should attach to whom, could not escape me. Professor Martin is not a seeker, he knows. But just as Laing is trapped in his psycho-social perception, so Professor Martin seems equally trapped in a socio-economic mode of thought that mistakes observation for experience and takes for granted all that sound so easy but are exceedingly difficult.

Laing's analysis and method of research is based on phenomenology, and this in Robert Macleod's phrase requires "an attitude of disciplined naiveté." This I believe is what Professor Martin finds hard to take, because if I have understood him correctly he seems to suggest that we observe a social phenomenon rather than experience it too.

The existential thesis and ideas of Laing, rough on any positivic philosophy of science, cannot alone be ascribed to a minority of so-called frustrated inhabitants in and out of Northern London. Seen in such an isolated and strictly confined context the real meaning and value becomes obscure.

Professor Martin may not be in sympathy with existentialists and phenomenologists, but therefore he should not look for some pathetic scapegoats and dwell on "the shaggy preachers of bed-sitterdom" at the expense of self-respecting and intelligent people, who, marvellously gifted, have sought and seek like Laing "the ground on which both reason and unreason are based." Failing not to see and convey this is an error worth taking into consideration. Talking of Laing's errors it may be wise for Professor Martin to remember not to throw stones when he himself sits in a house of glass.

RITA SKARE PEAKER

Bergen,
Norway

I AM NOT a positivist, but merely concerned to point out that a variety of levels of analysis are relevant to the questions which concern Dr Laing. These levels are normally thought of as "external", though I put external here (as in my article) in inverted commas to indicate the complexity of the internal/external distinction. I do not know of *any* sociologist who conceives of experience as irrelevant to observation.

DAVID MARTIN

London

AUTHORS

Walter Laqueur's article is based on the opening address at the annual conference of the International Institute of Strategic Studies in Strega . . . Professor Laqueur is director of the Institute of Contemporary History in London, editor of its *Journal of Contemporary History*, and teaches at the Georgetown University in Washington, D.C. His most recent book is *Out of the Ruins of Europe* (Library Press, N.Y., 1971). . . .

Sidney Hook is Professor of Philosophy at New York University. His most recent article in ENCOUNTER was a critique of "Illich's De-Schooled Utopia" (January). . . .

François Bondy is literary editor of *Die Weltwoche* in Zürich, and for many years Editor of the magazine *Preuves* in Paris. His article on "Sartre's Flaubert" appeared in the December 1971 issue of ENCOUNTER. . . .

John Holloway is Reader in Modern English at Cambridge and a Fellow of Queens' College. His earlier article on "The Death and Resurrection of the Folk Tale" appeared in October 1970. . . .

Peter Black is TV critic for the *Daily Mail*. His book on television in Britain, *The Mirror in the Corner*, has just been published by Hutchinson. . . .

Bernard Bergonzi is Professor of English at the University of Warwick. His books include *The Situation of the Novel* (Macmillan). . . .

D. J. Watkin is Librarian of the Fine Arts Faculty Library in the University of Cambridge. . . .

Eloise Knapp Hay has been teaching English and American literature at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and in India at Delhi University. She is the author of *The Political Novels of Joseph Conrad* (1967) and is writing a comparative study of English and American literatures from 1800 to the present. . . .

Yuli Daniel's poem, "And at That Time", from which the poem printed here is taken, is included in his complete poems recently published in Amsterdam under the title *Stikhi iz nevoli*. A bilingual edition of this collection is in preparation. . . .

John Toft (born in Staffordshire in 1933) has travelled widely in the East. He now lectures at Brighton Teachers' College. *The Bargees*, his first novel, appeared in 1970; W. H. Allen have just published his second novel, *The Wedge*.

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Life & Letters Today

London

THE EMBARRASSMENT OF BEING IRVING: *The name Irving appears to be an ill-fated one for literary men —and one which is causing a certain amount of confusion at the moment.*

Historian David Irving, who is being sued for £100,000 by his publishers to try and recover the amount of damages and cost in the PQ17 libel case, points out that he is in no way connected with two other Irvings, Clifford and Clive.

Clifford Irving is the author involved in the court-room dispute over Howard Hughes' biography. Clive Irving is the British newspaperman, currently working in the U.S.A., who some years ago was involved in the "Sunday Times" *paying a considerable sum to buy Mussolini's diaries. It turned out that Irving and the* "Sunday Times" *had bought a fake.*

EVENING STANDARD

Sydney

LOST SEX: Fighting broke out among hundreds of students at the University of New South Wales here today after speakers at a meeting accused the Roman Catholic lay organisation Opus Dei of removing several thousand sex manuals from the office of a student newspaper.

One group tried to raid Warrane College, run by Opus Dei. In the resulting brawl 10 students were arrested by police, who called up reinforcements in 20 cars.

REUTER

New York City

THE HIGHER CRITICISM: *What is a sense of theatre, what is a theatrical gesture? I thought of this recently [writes Clive Barnes, Theatre Critic of* "The New York Times"*] when David Frost invited me and about 50 or so of his nearest and dearest friends to go to lunch with him in Bermuda. I have known Mr Frost for a number of years, and he is a master of the theatre. The sheer flamboyance of taking a plane and flying to Bermuda to lunch was totally irresistible.*

When the morning for departure dawned I was convinced I had made a dire mistake—it was going to be thunderbolting in Bermuda, the people on the plane would be deathly bores, and we would crash leaving the obituary writers of the New York press in a sad and sorry state of unpreparedness. Yet the day went beautifully—it was arcane fun. Mr Frost's sense of occasion, his sense of theatre, never deserted him.

Flair is all important. There is flair in going to Bermuda for lunch—but there would be no flair in going to Staten Island—unless you took the entire ferry and had the New York Philharmonic playing "The Bluebells of Scotland" on the way across.

If I were a rich man I too would take people to Bermuda—probably playwrights and many I would leave right there. But I just know I would not have the nerve to wear a suit the colour of crushed strawberries—which, believe it or not, is what David Frost wore. It was devised by Hardy Amies—they say.

THE TIMES

THE SOUND OF NAMES: *Fewer patients would become addicted to barbiturates, pep pills and vitamins if doctors were to prescribe sugar-milk pills and bottles of coloured water instead, a retired Surrey general practitioner suggests today.*

The plea to bring back the placebo is made by Dr William Edwards, who says that taking this type of medicine has a great therapeutic effect. Placebos are much less popular with the medical profession than they used to be.

Dr Edwards writes in the medical newspaper Pulse *that it does not matter what is in the coloured medicine—"though it works best if it tastes rather foul and is either red or brown." He says that green medicine is "viewed with suspicion and probably goes down the sink."*

He suggests that half a dozen pretty capsules should be added to the official formulary of medicines. They should be given complicated medical-sounding names so that their authenticity would not be brought into question.

The pills and medicines could be prescribed where there is nothing the matter, when it does not matter, and where the doctor does not know what is wrong.

DAILY TELEGRAPH

Attica Prison

BLACKNESS AT NOON: What do Oscar Lewis, Marshall McLuhan, Erik Erikson, Arthur Koestler, and the UN Declaration on Human Rights have in common? . . . They are contraband reading in New York State prisons, and are some of the authors listed in a brief filed by lawyers of the American Civil Liberties Union on behalf of prisoners in the penitentiaries at Auburn, Stormville, and Attica. The censors? Prison wardens, or their deputies, in many cases prison guards. One of the lawyers working on prisoner-rights litigation says:

"Wardens or their deputies invariably censor political, radical and so-called prurient material. Most of our complaints from inmates involve Black Panther publications or such things as the writings of Mao Tse-tung and Che Guevara. Books by and about Eldridge Cleaver, Malcolm X, Bobby Seale, Martin Sostre—all relevant to the lives of the prisoners—are taboo. Koestler's *Darkness at Noon* is not allowed in. Maybe it sounds too black. Or maybe the censors confuse Koestler with Kunstler, the activist lawyer. . . ."

NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REVIEW

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Arthur Koestler
THE ROOTS OF COINCIDENCE

'. . . . upsets once and for all the anti Extra-Sensory-Perception applecart'

Michael Foot/Evening Standard

'. . . . nothing published in the present year 1972 will have wider intellectual influence'

H. D. Ziman/Daily Telegraph

'He is an asset to our culture, a cogent and persuasive reasoner, his mind is open. We are content that he should do our thinking for us'

Cyril Connolly/Sunday Times £2.00

Peter Black
THE MIRROR IN THE CORNER

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Daphne Nicholson Bennett
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